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DEC. 2019.

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suits up to play
Prince Charles

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JOHN

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interview

By Dylan Jones

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of the rich
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WORLD EXCLUSIVE

Robert. *Freaking.* De Niro!

On MARTIN SCORSESE'S ultimate mafia
masterpiece THE IRISHMAN

Interview by Stuart McGurk Photographed by Charlie Gray

'There is no such thing as simple. Simple is hard'

- MARTIN SCORSESE

A full-body photograph of a man with short, styled brown hair and a light beard. He is wearing a white t-shirt under a blue button-down shirt, which is open at the collar. Over the blue shirt, he wears a dark grey, textured cardigan. He is also wearing dark trousers. On his left wrist, he has a silver-toned watch with a dark face. On his right wrist, he has a silver-toned chain bracelet. He is also wearing a silver-toned ring on his left ring finger. He is standing with his left hand on his hip and his right arm slightly extended. The background is a clear blue sky with some light clouds, and a city skyline is visible in the distance, including a prominent tall building on the left.

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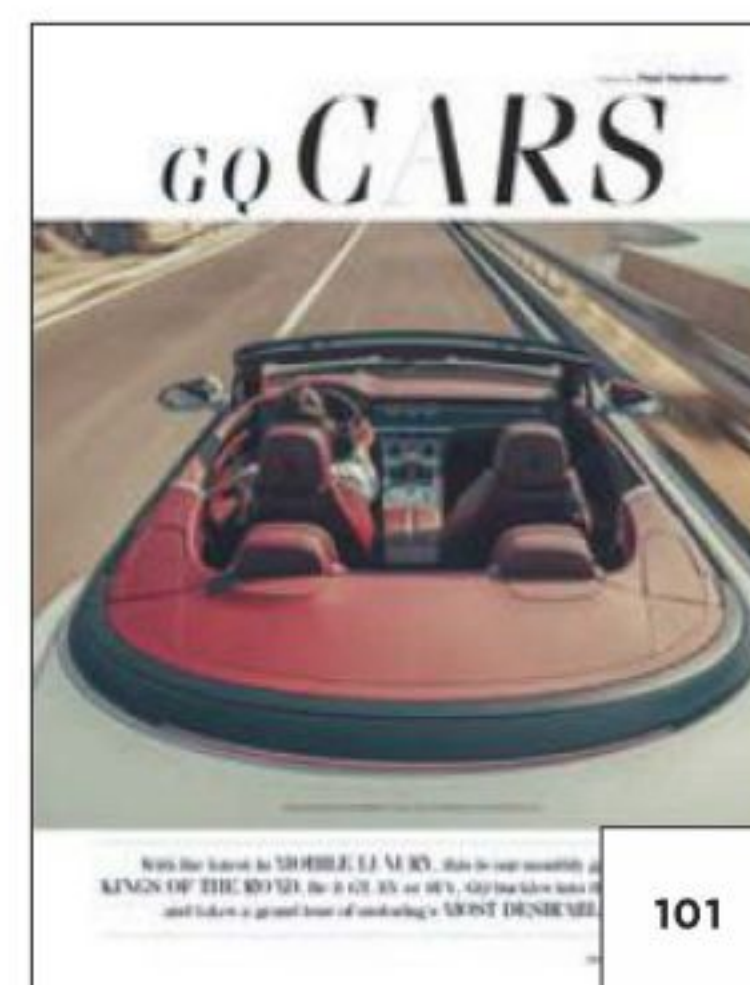
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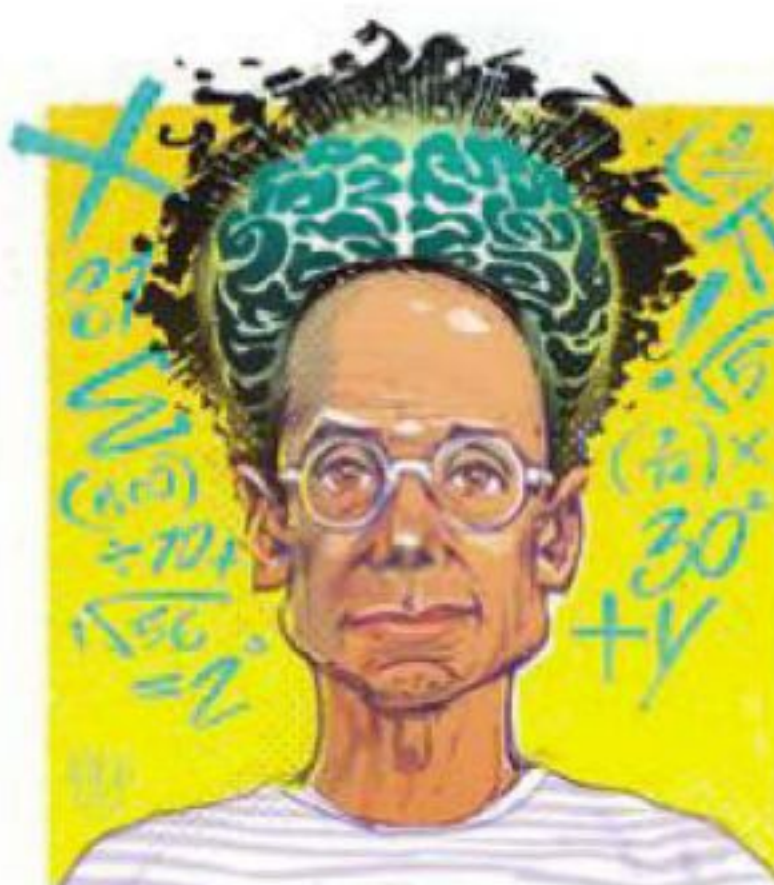


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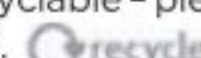
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GQ EDITOR'S LETTER

Just when you thought they were out...

De-aged, but not de-clawed, De Niro and Pacino reunite for one last hit

With actors, all we've ever really wanted is a reason to believe. A reason to believe their madness, their gullibility, their charm, their capacity for heroics or simply their good looks. Back in the Seventies, Robert De Niro and Al Pacino almost made you believe they could fly; they were men who looked like they came from the cigarette end of the city, playing men who looked like they still lived there. Men who didn't have to shout about their past, who didn't have to land the first punch, only the last.

Just as it is recognised that American cinema was at its best during the first six years of the Seventies, so it is acknowledged that during that time De Niro and Pacino were the only two actors capable of shaking the American psyche. Both Manhattan-born Italian-Americans with frighteningly good looks, both displaying very obvious "Brandoperatics", they made their mark in a series of films that have become cinematic benchmarks: De Niro with *Mean Streets* (1973), *Taxi Driver* (1976) and *New York, New York* (1977), all made with Martin Scorsese, and Pacino with *Serpico* (1973), *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975) and the first two *Godfather* (1972, 1974) films (the second of which also starred De Niro, although they never shared the same frame). Both actors had the ability to imbue their fictional characters with palpable sincerity, albeit one that was firmly rooted in the method.

Both men have always taken themselves fearfully seriously, with Pacino often seeming the chippier of the two. And while De Niro rarely gave interviews – often disappointing when he did – Pacino went out of his way to describe his craft, probably because he has always been the more insecure. The best one unlucky reporter from the *Dallas Morning News* could get out of Pacino was, "It seems, it seems, like, uh, there's a... there's a kind of roll here... uh, er, again, it, it just happened that way, so, uh, I'm ah, I'm ah, it, it's a wave, I'm gonna ride it for a while." He has made occasional forays into the theatre, grabbing rather desperately for gravitas: he once did *Richard III*, after which, according to the *Independent*, one critic famously wrote that Pacino had played Shakespeare and lost. The Seventies were good to them both, particularly De Niro, who ended it with the role of a lifetime, Jake La Motta in Scorsese's *Raging Bull* (1980).



Al Pacino and Robert De Niro on the set of *The Irishman*, Martin Scorsese's new instant classic

The Eighties, however, were very different. After the monstrous histrionics of *Raging Bull*, De Niro almost seemed to fold into himself, making inopportune little cameos in *Brazil* (1985), *The Mission* (1986), *Angel Heart* (1987) and *The Untouchables* (1987), vehicles that meant he never had to extend himself. There was still the occasional great role – *The King Of Comedy* (1982), *Once Upon A Time In America* (1984) – but professionally he seemed spent, like an ageing sportsman who's still got the skill but none of the ambition.

Pacino, meanwhile, seemed to give up acting completely. After his exorbitant portrayal of Cuban drug lord Tony Montana in Brian De Palma's 1983 crime drama *Scarface* (the method gone mad) and a disastrous role in Hugh Hudson's rarely seen *Revolution* (1985), Pacino all but disappeared. For four years he was a virtual recluse – such a recluse that, in the public's eyes, he almost ceased to exist. Most actors' careers could do with some judicious editing, though Pacino seems to have believed the less-is-more mantra right from the outset.

Then, towards the end of the Eighties, as though harking some distant yuppie clarion call, they both set to work. Anxious to fund his Tribeca Film Center, De Niro suddenly turned into Dan Aykroyd, seemingly accepting anything that came his way, ricocheting from one lacklustre film to another, taking his by-now familiar tics with him: *We're No Angels* (1989), *Jacknife* (1989), *Awakenings* (1990), *Stanley & Iris* (1990), *Guilty By Suspicion* (1991), *Backdraft* (1991), *Mistress* (1992) – De Niro was in them all. But before his resurrection with *Goodfellas* in 1990, De Niro did make one other classic, albeit a forgotten one. Directed

by Martin Brest in 1988 and costarring Charles Grodin, *Midnight Run* is one of the funniest films of the Eighties, if not *the* funniest. Playing a broadly drawn bounty hunter on the trail of a bail-jumping accountant (Grodin), De Niro proved that he could do comedy. The facial mannerisms were still there (continually glancing from side to side as though he were being followed), as were the maniacal grins and stage-Irish frowns, but they were used with such comic subtlety that, watching the film for the first time, it was difficult to believe that De Niro hadn't been playing comedy all his life.

Pacino began moving up through the gears too, though not with the same kind of success. His comeback was the 1989 thriller *Sea Of Love*, a decent enough movie, for sure, but after that he tended to choose grandiose and often grandstanding roles that appealed to his weaker, baser instincts. First there was the monstrous over-acting in the misguided *The Godfather Part III* (1990) and then the rudderless performance in the 1992 drama *Scent Of A Woman* (for which, bizarrely, he won an Oscar) and, finally, the grotesque *Carlito's Way* (1993). He was great in *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1992), but only because he seemed reined-in (and with a script by David Mamet, how could he possibly fail?). In the early Seventies, Pacino hinted at a malevolence that was too slippery and too volatile to catch, whereas after that he wore his machismo on his sleeve, so to speak. In fact, in many of his Nineties and noughties films, Pacino seems to act like a method pimp. His most annoying trait was speaking very softly and then suddenly *screaming!* or *yelping!* a random word or two before returning to a whisper. As for De Niro, his most annoying trait was looking too pleased with himself when he smiled, which is hardly a crime.

In 1995 they both came back with a vengeance, with De Niro starring in Scorsese's extraordinary *Casino* and both of them appearing (for the first time on screen together) in Michael Mann's epic *Heat*, the third instalment in Mann's career-long thesis on modern crime – a theme he had already explored in *Thief* (1981), or *Violent Streets* as it was later renamed, and *Manhunter* (1986) – pitting De Niro's ice-minded crook against Pacino's LAPD detective. A simple, if rather long (eight minutes shy of three hours) game of cops and robbers, it allowed both actors to flex their >>



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GQ EDITOR'S LETTER

>> not inconsiderable muscles, rushing around like men half their age. De Niro was magnificent and, after disappointments such as *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1994), *Mad Dog And Glory* (1993) and *Cape Fear* (1991), which was like watching him hitting one note on a piano for two hours, it was great to see the actor back on form, rubber-stamping once again his reputation as the greatest actor of his generation. Pacino, meanwhile, played his part like it was drawn with a trowel instead of a paintbrush, externalising at every opportunity.

For a while, it seemed as though De Niro managed to retain most of the mystery and dignity that made him so commanding in his early roles, while Pacino found himself resorting to the most adolescent forms of flagrancy. The legendary film critic Pauline Kael once wrote, "He creates a quiet, ominous space around himself." And indeed he once did, but for many years Pacino simply screamed when he should have whispered, exploded when he should have just sat still. In fact, there is a scene in *Heat* that perfectly sums up Pacino's pathological obsessions with his craft. When his character's wife complains that he never lets his guard down, he says that he needs to hold on to his "angst", because "It keeps me sharp, on the edge, where I gotta be." And didn't we just know it.

In the years since, both actors have bounced between the brilliant and the infantile, with De Niro in particular seemingly sleepwalking through a succession of dreadful comedies; in fact, he's been doing this for such a long time that for many he is simply the bumbling, gurning character actor who wandered into *Grudge Match*, *New Year's Eve*, *Last Vegas* and *Little Fockers*. For those who remember him from his starburst arrival in the Seventies, we clung on to his terrific appearances in *Jackie Brown*, *Wag The Dog*, *Analyze This*, *Ronin*,

Silver Linings Playbook and *American Hustle*. As for Pacino, he took a variety of cameos, punching well below his weight in stuff such as *Danny Collins*, *Two For The Money* and *The Recruit*.

This month, though, they both star in the most anticipated film of the year, perhaps the most anticipated film of the decade. Martin Scorsese's gangster movie *The Irishman* is based on the 2004 book *I Heard You Paint Houses* by Charles Brandt, starring De Niro, Pacino and Joe Pesci as Frank "The Irishman" Sheeran, Jimmy Hoffa and Russell Bufalino, respectively. It charts Sheeran as he recounts his alleged jobs as a hitman for the Bufalino crime family. The film is catnip for anyone who was either brought up with, or who has immersed themselves in, the previous De Niro/Scorsese collaborations (*Mean Streets*, *Taxi Driver*, *New York, New York*, *Raging Bull*, *The King Of Comedy*, *Goodfellas*, *Cape Fear* and *Casino*). *The Irishman* is their ninth feature film together and their first since *Casino* (perhaps Scorsese's most underrated film), while also the fourth film to star both De Niro and Pacino (following *The Godfather Part II*, *Heat* and the appalling *Righteous Kill*), the seventh to star both De Niro and Pesci (following *Raging Bull*, *Once Upon A Time In America*, *Goodfellas*, *A Bronx Tale*, *Casino* and *The Good Shepherd*), and the first time Pacino has been directed by Scorsese.

Expectations have been understandably high, but Scorsese has another hit on his hands. Starting on page 152, GQ's Stuart McGurk talks exclusively to Robert De Niro and pieces together the extraordinary story of how the greatest actor of his generation (still), along with the greatest film director of his time, managed to pull off one of their greatest coups. De Niro will always remain frustratingly aloof, yet McGurk manages to tease the actor out of himself, producing a fascinating – and resonant – profile in the process. **GQ**



On the cover: Robert De Niro wears coat by **Brunello Cucinelli**, £5,100. brunellocucinelli.com

On the subscribers' cover: Elton John photographed at his home in Wentworth, Surrey, in 1974.

Dylan Jones

Dylan Jones, Editor



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GQ CONTRIBUTORS

Charlie GRAY

Photographer
Charlie Gray shot Robert De Niro for this month's cover story, ahead of the release of *The Irishman*, a film that sees De Niro reunited with Martin Scorsese, Joe Pesci and Al Pacino. "I have wanted to photograph Mr De Niro ever since I watched his films as a teenager," says Gray, "and if it wasn't incredible enough photographing the great actor in New York, I got to ad-lib a scenario straight out of *Goodfellas* with him."



Luke DAY

The feverishly awaited third series of *The Crown* is released this month, with an entirely new cast playing the British royal family. *GQ* Fashion Director and *GQ* Style Editor Luke Day styled Josh O'Connor for a shoot that channelled the actor's character, the young Prince Charles. "He has all of the prince's nuances," he says. "It was such a joyous shoot."



Chris AYRES

GQ contributor
Chris Ayres met poker player turned high-net-worth Instagram star Dan Bilzerian in Bel-Air to try to fathom the man behind the playboy veneer. "When I profiled Bilzerian for *GQ* in 2015, he refused to take part," says Ayres. "So imagine my surprise when I got an invitation to sit down with him for this piece. I should have known there'd be a catch..."



Charlie BURTON

After years of trying to make it in gaming, Tameem Antoniades' company, Ninja Theory, released the multi-Bafta-winning *Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice*. He became a millionaire almost overnight. "Tameem comes from the world of video games," says *GQ* Senior Commissioning Editor Charlie Burton, "but now he wants to create a new form of entertainment."



Emily WRIGHT

GQ contributor Emily Wright travelled through Zambia, Mozambique and South Africa for this month's Travel section. "Safari is all about seclusion. The privilege of seeing the animals in privacy, without the rumble of multiple vehicles jostling for position, is where the real luxury lies."



Alexander FURY

"During my meeting with Riccardo Tisci, chief creative officer at Burberry since 2018," says *GQ* contributor Alexander Fury, "a woman had a dramatic screaming match with half the restaurant's staff. It fascinated us. We then shifted to discussing his career. I hope the interview is half as interesting!" **GQ**

PRADA

LUNA ROSSA

CARBON



GQ DETAILS

From emerging trends at the **FRONTIER OF FASHION** to every **KEY TALKING POINT** in art, tech, taste and politics, this month's big gains are all in the **DETAILS**... Edited by **Charlie Burton**

Laser swords? No.
Twee robots?
Nuh-uh.
Werner
Herzog?
Oh, yes...

THE MANDALORIAN
LAUNCHES THE STAR
WARS UNIVERSE ON
DISNEY+. GEORGE
LUCAS LET US ALL
DOWN. THIS WON'T...
PAGE 66



3 BILLIONAIRE

BILLIONAIRE.COM

Flamenco R&B... WHO KNEW?

Is Spanish star Rosalía about to make a medieval romance 2019's first billion-view hit?

She has the most-viewed music video by a female artist of 2019 so far (900 million views and counting), her lyrics have been lovingly translated in Oprah's magazine, *O*, she has been cooed over by everyone from Dua Lipa to Pharrell Williams (who is now collaborating with her) and her most recent album won five-star raves across the music press. As one reviewer put it, the record was "the calling card of a unique new talent". And yet on paper, Catalan-born artist Rosalía (full name Rosalía Vila Tobella)

was not a shoo-in for global stardom: the 26-year-old's genre of choice is flamenco; she sings in Spanish; and her concept album, *El Mal Querer*, is based on her university dissertation about a Medieval romance, telling the story of a maiden locked away by her jealous husband. Rosalía refashions the tale into an R&B epic and, what's more, she's an extraordinary *tour de force* on stage. See her in London at Brixton's O2 Academy on 5 December – that is, if you can get a ticket.

Story by **Charlie Burton**
Photograph by **Estévez+Belloso**



Rosalía photographed in Barcelona



MUSIC ON THE MOVE – Sonos takes its sound to the great outdoors...

If Sonos' wireless multi-room music system is as core to your life as it is to ours, then you'll long have wondered: when will they make an outdoor speaker? That day, at last, has come. The Sonos Move is battery powered, weather resistant and packs a hell of a sound. As expected, it connects to Wi-Fi, but if that doesn't reach far enough then there's Bluetooth as well. Cue it up. £399. sonos.com



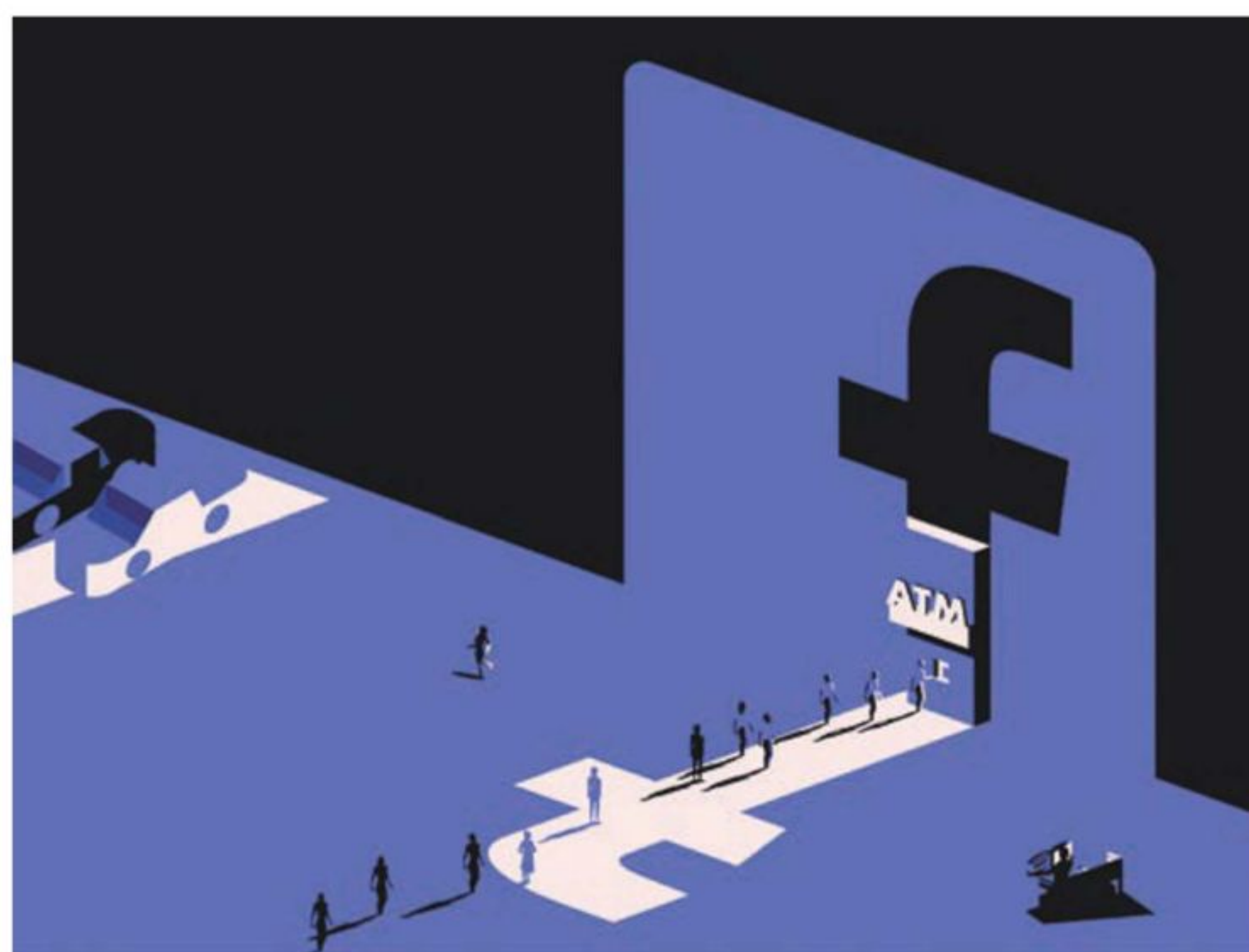
THE KOOPLES

BARBARA PALVIN & DYLAN SPROUSE

On 18 June 2019, a video appeared on Facebook. Over images of people plying their trades and counting banknotes, a soothing voice announced the launch of an organisation whose aspiration was to create a global digital currency called Libra. “Join us as we move towards a world where money works for everyone,” the voice said. What the voice did not say was that Libra’s architect was also the platform where the video had been uploaded. Facebook had indeed designed Libra, but it made sense to gloss over its role: after the Cambridge Analytica uproar, the social network had become the world’s favourite techno-villain, blamed for everything from data breaches to being used for Russian information warfare. One might have expected Facebook to keep a low profile, listen to governments and steer clear of regulatory morass. The creation of a currency did not qualify as staying out of trouble.

Libra is a digital currency whose declared goal is providing an online payment tool to people who struggle to access banking services in deprived regions – but it will likely catch on among Facebook’s two-billion-odd users regardless of location. Here’s how it will work: users will buy units of Libra through an exchange, paying in state-sanctioned currencies such as the dollar, and their Libra balance will appear on a virtual “wallet” called Calibra embedded on their Messenger, WhatsApp or in a distinct app. Exactly like money in an online banking account, Libra would then be used to pay for goods and services online or offline, or transferred to someone else. There are multiple reasons why someone would use Libra, rather than stick to actual money, the most fundamental being that Libra transfers, including international remittances, would be instantaneous and charge trifling fees.

Libra transactions will be validated by the Geneva-based Libra Association, comprising Facebook and 26 other companies, including Visa, Uber, Spotify and Ebay, among others. The Libra payment network will be structured along the lines of a blockchain, the



Facebook’s DIGITAL CURRENCY has *BIG* plans for you

Libra wants to be far more than simply your internet money...

Story by **Gian Volpicelli**

virtual scaffolding for cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin. A key difference between Bitcoin and Libra, however, is that, while the former’s value is determined by demand and supply, the latter’s price is designed to be stable, anchored to a basket of currencies and treasury bonds held in the Libra Association’s coffers.

Libra is not expected to launch until 2020, but governments worldwide are already on the warpath. Facebook has promised that a user’s Calibra information will be anonymous (to wit: “pseudonymous”) and never linked to their Facebook profile to improve ad targeting. But the company has a track record for breaking such promises – infamously in 2014

with the merger of Facebook and WhatsApp data.

“[If Facebook broke its promise] it would have the ability to pair your financial information with your social graph,” says Jamie Burke, CEO of blockchain-focused venture capital firm Outlier Ventures. “That means what you’re spending your money on, paired with your social contacts, your needs, wants, desires. You combine these things and that’s the Holy Grail of advertising.” Libra’s potential for boosting Facebook’s business model is enormous and we can only speculate about the consequences of such a move. If the past years have taught

us anything, it’s that Facebook ads can be insidious in dozens of different ways.

There is a further wrinkle in Libra’s plan that should ring Facebook-sceptic alarm bells: Libra doesn’t just want to become your internet money, it might also want to become your internet passport. One line in its “white paper” gives it away: “An additional goal of the association is to develop and promote an open identity standard. We believe that decentralised and portable digital identity is a prerequisite to financial inclusion and competition.”

Digital identity is another technical unicorn that Facebook, in Libra’s clothing, might manage to ensnare. Think about it as a virtual document that enables its holder to prove their identity or their attributes when accessing a website, an app or an e-commerce account. A possible outcome is that from Spotify to online banking to YouPorn – if the UK’s “porn block” ever comes into effect – Calibra might become the go-to login. Or, indeed, a way to lock you out. “Libra could give you a ‘Libra identity’ and they might restrict or limit how you can use that in the future,” says Burke. “Or potentially even be able to revoke it.”

That would leave us with Facebook as the gatekeeper of global online verification. Whether that should worry you depends on how wary of Facebook you are. Either way, Facebook has enough users and clout to make its attempt at setting the terms of online identity very credible. We might soon all need a Calibra wallet – even if we did not want one.

Libra’s digital competitors A number of independent cryptocurrencies have been touted as potential ‘Libra killers’, including...



Venus

“Stablecoin” backed by real-world assets; like Libra without Facebook’s potential privacy issues.



China’s coin

Not amenable to the idea of a stateless currency, China is pre-empting Libra.



Metal Pay

A digital wallet that rewards regular users with its own Metal coins as an incentive.



Walmart Coin

The hypermarket chain is developing a coin to track spending habits in its 11,000 stores.

Big TIME operators

All SAS, no sass. For this season's sexiest watch releases, the focus is on souped-up military details

Story by **Teo van den Broeke**
Photograph by **Matthew Shave**

Chances are you already have a dress watch. And you almost certainly own a classic sports timepiece (think TAG Heuer Carrera or Breitling Navitimer). The likelihood is, however, that you don't have one of these military-inspired vintage bad boys in your collection. Styled up to look like the tool watches of the past, but imbued with as much high-spec intelligence as their hardworking forebears (the brilliantly compact Khaki Pilot Pioneer, for instance, features a matte 33mm dial to avoid unnecessary glare and contains an ultra-reliable H-50 hand-wound movement), wear yours with a spot of this season's military-inspired outerwear for full-on high-flying GI vibes.

Omega Seamaster 300 Master Co-Axial,
£4,470. omegawatches.com



Rado Captain Cook, £1,870. rado.com



DETAILS WATCHES

Montblanc 1858 Automatic, £2,035. montblanc.com

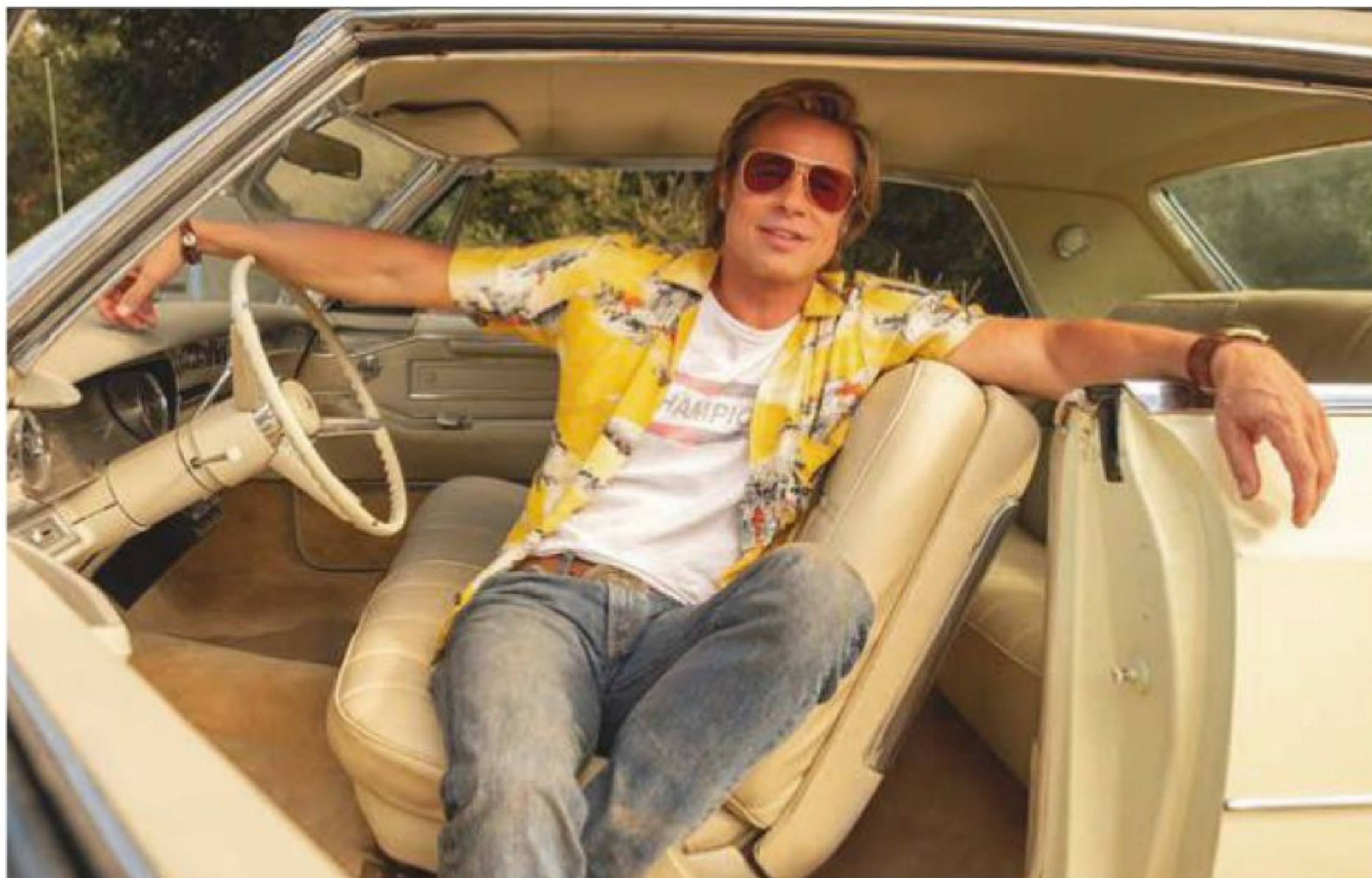


Hamilton Khaki Aviation Pilot Pioneer Chrono Quartz, £535. hamiltonwatch.com



Swatch Sistem Thought, £180. swatch.com





How Brad Pitt proved I'm not 'POST-clothes'

Just when you think you've worn out your wardrobe, along comes a look that reminds you you're wrong

Story by **Tony Parsons**

Did you ever love a shirt? At that age when all the shirts you own have been chosen by your mother, I gazed breathless upon the shirt of my dreams: a sky-blue button-down Ben Sherman with salmon-pink pinstripes that belonged to my friend David Peck's big brother, a major dude of 16 who told us that if we wanted to understand the Vietnam War then we should listen to Jim Morrison and The Doors. His shirt introduced me to the secret power of clothes.

All at once I understood completely what good clothes can do for you. I saw how clothes can be an armour against the world and give you boundless confidence and stiffen your spine as you move through this life. I believed that wearing that sky-blue button-down Ben Sherman with salmon-pink pinstripes would both fulfil and transform me – love's great dream of magically being turned into the best version of yourself, miraculously better than you have ever been before, more swagger, more attractive, possibly even able to talk to girls.

Then you grow up and one day realise you own more good shirts than you can ever possibly wear. You have bought it all. Your wardrobes and drawers are overflowing and your hunger for clothes is fading. You reach a point in your life in which clothes no longer matter, certainly not in the obsessive way they did when the world was young and big brothers wore button-down shirts from Ben Sherman. And when half a lifetime has slipped away since your mother chose your shirts, you realise you have become like the famous *New Yorker* cartoon in which a man sits in a room piled high with the booty of the material world reflecting, "I guess I've got enough crap to last me a lifetime."

"Ah," you think, "now I am a post-clothes man."

Sometimes you wistfully recall the clothes that you adored after that first great love. In the decades after that Ben Sherman with salmon-pink pinstripes, I had suits from

Savile Row that felt more like a second skin than an item of clothing. There was a complete set of Giorgio Armani cardigans, in autumnal colours, so lightweight you could wear them in all seasons. And there was a classic MA1 green nylon bomber jacket from Prada that was equally at home in Vogue House as it was walking the dog. But then they were gone – the Prada bomber destroyed in a dry-cleaning tragedy, the Armani knitwear worn until it fell to bits. And like anything, or anyone, that you have loved, you realise they can't be replaced, not really. And in the end you stop trying. The thrill has gone. You are a post-clothes man.

Then you see Brad Pitt in his denim jacket in *Once Upon A Time In... Hollywood* and suddenly you are not quite as finished with clothes as you thought. Even though your brain understands the reason no 55-year-old man ever looked that good in a denim jacket has more to do with Brad Pitt than it does the jacket, your heart still demands to know: exactly what is Brad wearing? And where can I buy it?

The denim jacket Brad Pitt wears in Quentin Tarantino's masterpiece is a Wrangler Icons 124MJ Western jacket – a classic with 100 per cent cotton, two flap chest pockets and two lower pockets with no closure, tobacco stitching, copper buttons and 13-ounce broken-twill denim. The one you can buy online from Wrangler right now differs from Pitt's in one respect only: costume designer Arianne Phillips sourced a vintage jacket for the film and it closes with a zip, whereas Wrangler's 124MJ now closes with those copper buttons.

Apart from the zip, you can own Brad's jacket for just £100. But you have to wonder, what exactly is it we want? To look as effortlessly gorgeous as Brad Pitt in the role of stuntman Cliff Booth? To look that shockingly attractive even in middle age? Yes, please. But above all we want love's eternal dream of fulfilment and transformation. The irony is that imitation will not get you there. The magic dust comes from the man as much as the kit. You could have put me in that Ben Sherman of David Peck's big brother and I would not have matched his élan, his swagger, his chic. I would not have spoken knowledgeably about Jim Morrison's insights into the Vietnam War. Despite the loveliness of my shirt, I would still not have known what to say to girls. If only it was that easy.

In *Once Upon A Time In... Hollywood*, Cliff Booth's wardrobe also includes cowboy boots and a yellow aloha shirt worn unbuttoned over a faded Champion T-shirt. Champion is a venerable old American manufacturer of spark plugs founded in 1908, although it did not impact the fashion consciousness of the world until Tarantino's film. Today you can buy that Champion T-shirt from the company's website (I looked) or one of many knockoffs all over the internet. But it will not make you or I look like Cliff Booth. And yet we can't help believing.

Even when your palette is jaded, even when you can feel your lifetime piling up and your wardrobe overflowing, the seductive power of great clothes is undeniable. You think you are post-clothes and then you see Chuka Umunna in a lightweight summer suit from Alexandra Wood. Or those eight-panel newsboy caps they sport in *Peaky Blinders*. Or Barack Obama at a basketball game in a Rag & Bone Manston bomber. Or, yes, Brad Pitt wearing his Wrangler jacket. And then you get it. A man is never post-clothes.



Once upon a time in... denim!

Brad Pitt's Wrangler Icons 124MJ Western jacket, as seen on screen, can be yours for £100.

Didn't know you needed a **WILD WEST** puffer?

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Story by **Teo van den Broeke**

You have face-fringed country star Orville Peck, TikTok sensation Lil Nas X and the fashion director of this very magazine – the man with more Stetsons than Billy The Kid – Mr Luke Day to thank for the nu-country resurgence not only hitting our ears but also dominating our wardrobes right now. Though fringed suede jackets and heavy-duty cowboy boots might not be for everyone, on the latter front, the country influence can be more easily absorbed into workaday wardrobes this season by way of sharp denim shirts and serviceable Sherpa jackets. Case in point, this Western-inspired plaid ski jacket by Moncler Grenoble. As chi-chi as it is rootin' tootin', wear yours with jeans and duck boots at the weekends and smarten things up by teaming it with a full denim tuxedo during the week. Yeehaw!



Jacket, £2,415. Shirt, £850. Trousers, £860. Boots, £1,640. Scarf, £230. Gloves, £670. All by **3 Moncler Grenoble**. moncler.com. Hat, stylist's own.

From left: Lil Nas X and Orville Peck at the 2019 MTV Music Awards; GQ Fashion Director Luke Day; (above left) Jon Voight in *Midnight Cowboy*



How SILICON VALLEY'S latest productivity hack went EXTREME

Who are the tech execs illegally 'microdosing' one of the most powerful psychoactive substances in the world?

Story by **Hayden Vernon** Illustration by **Mike Hughes**

Acid used to be about turning on, tuning in and dropping out. How times have changed. In recent years, a particular breed of high-achieving technology executive has begun seeing LSD as a route up the career ladder. Where once it was about losing control, it is now being seen by some as a way to gain it – renewing focus, improving mood. The difference, they believe, is the dose. According to the evangelists, a “microdose” – usually up to a 20th of a regular dose – changes the drug’s effect, although not, of course, its legal status. As a class A, possession in the UK carries a maximum sentence of seven years. LSD is also illegal in California, yet it has caught on among the entrepreneurial set of Silicon Valley. Tim Ferriss, an investor and author of *The 4-Hour Workweek*, says that almost all the billionaires he knows are using hallucinogens regularly.

The tech world is notably obsessed with efficiency and disruption, principles that have bled into the personal lives of some of its leading lights, with a number of them turning to “biohacking” their bodies, using vitamins, exercise and now drugs such as LSD.

It appears to be part of a broader psychedelic renaissance, with experiments in microdosing extending to more extreme hallucinogens too – notably ayahuasca, which contains the psychoactive compound DMT (like LSD, a class-A substance in the UK). This South American plant has long piqued the interest of people who want a trip so profound that it results in

‘Ayahuasca was a stepping stone for me to get back on my feet’

“ego death”, to use its proponents’ terminology. But while shifting perspective away from an “I”-centric world-view might be a form of enlightenment, it comes at a cost. Those who take the drug usually experience vomiting and diarrhoea and the curious souls who visit shamans prepared to administer the potion do so as part of a highly controlled ritual, often with doctors on standby. And while few hallucinogens are physically addictive, users can become psychologically dependent on LSD and DMT and, long-term, the inducement of persistent psychosis is also considered a risk.

Yet, according to some, regular microdoses of ayahuasca have had a positive impact on their psychological wellbeing. “I have fewer headaches and mental imbalances,” says Liana Silvey, who describes suffering from depression until she tried microdosing the vine a year ago. Or take Jay Rossi, 42, who has been in and out of treatment for heroin addiction and mental health problems for most of his adult life. Fed up with cycling through conventional treatment methods, he turned to microdosing ayahuasca at the start of this year. He has not touched alcohol or drugs since. “I had more get-up-and-go, more motivation. It was a stepping stone for me to get back on my feet,” he says.

But does microdosing work? “We need to know both the potential benefits and risks,” says David Olson, a professor at the University Of California, who recently led one of the first studies into the effects of microdosing DMT. Rats injected with tiny doses showed a positive effect on the rodents’ fear responses, meaning in theory the drug could be beneficial in the treatment of anxiety and PTSD.

Olson compares the current trend of microdosing psychedelics to the illegal use of anabolic steroids in the Seventies and Eighties, when bodybuilders realised the drugs had incredible effects on muscle growth. It took scientists a while to catch up with anecdotal reports of the benefits and understand the risks. Olson says the same thing is happening with microdosing. “Just as anabolic steroids can be used in certain cases to improve health, these drugs might find therapeutic uses – with enough research.” Conversely, Olson’s DMT study also revealed adverse reactions, including female rats experiencing a breakdown of neurons that looked similar to the effects of chronic stress. It is also difficult to disentangle microdosing from placebo effects.

Rossi, however, is less concerned. He thinks even if microdosing is just a placebo, it will still show that people have the power within themselves to overcome their problems. “If it’s working,” he says, “then that’s what it’s about.”

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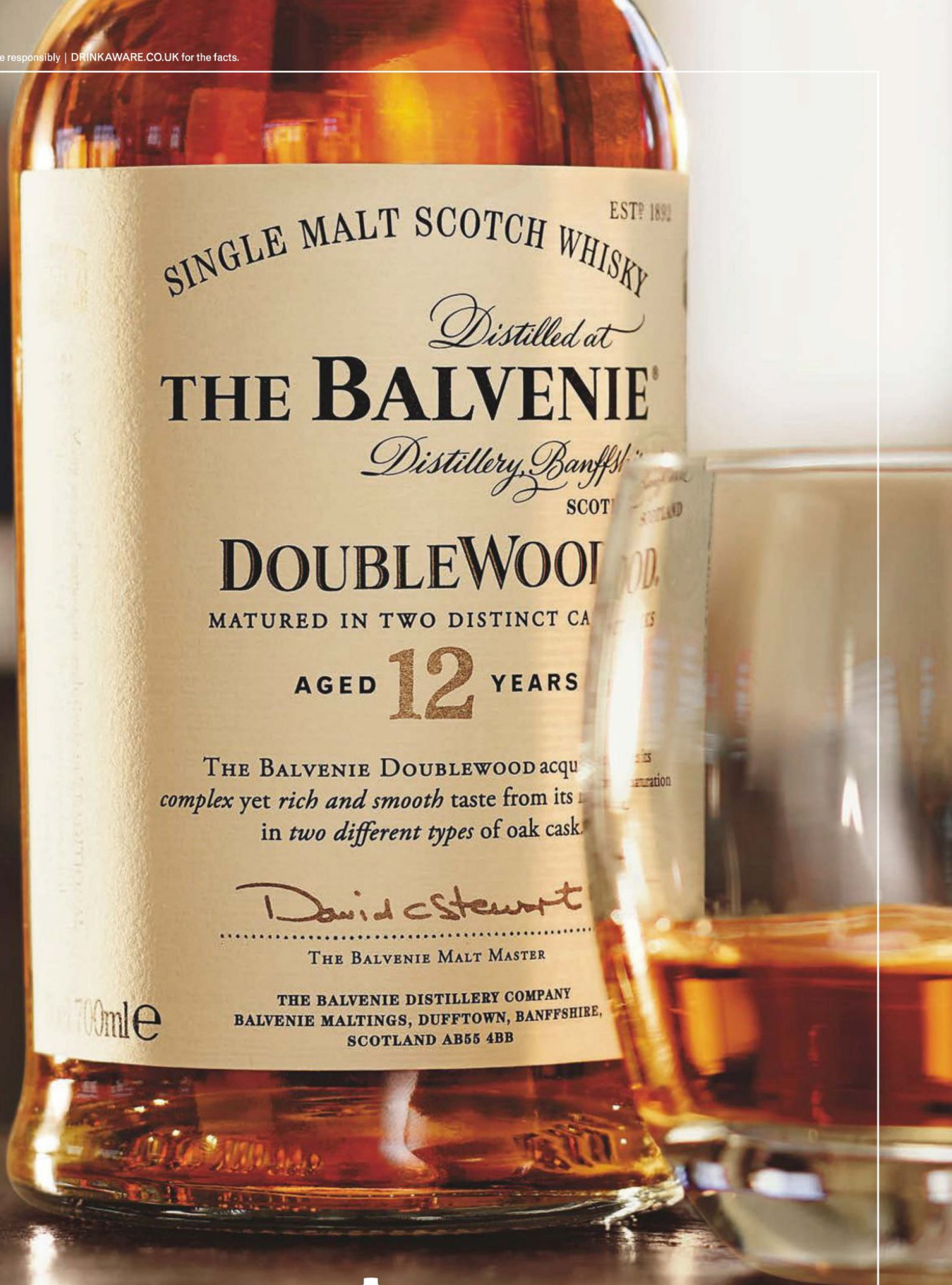
Putting the 'ship' in starship (and also the 'star', come to think of it),
the Adastral solves sailing snags you never knew existed



It has been described by the industry as “extreme”, “insane” and “rule breaking”. Actually, the extraordinary-looking Adastr super yacht is profoundly practical – it’s the challenges it has to overcome that are unreasonable. Here’s the problem: the brief was to create a boat that could accommodate large, luxurious living quarters yet also be able to traverse the globe, coping with all the meteorological challenges that might come its way, while travelling efficiently and at high speed. The solution was this huge, aerodynamic trimaran with a low-friction skin that is itself part of the boat’s structure and a body that was built almost entirely in composites – carbon fibre, e-glass, Kevlar – even down to the interiors. The 42.5-metre diesel-engined vessel has a range of 10,000 nautical miles at 10 knots and comes with roomy quarters for nine guests and six crew, plus a spacious saloon and aft deck. Its designer, John Shuttleworth, believes it may just be the most fuel-efficient super yacht ever created. Now, it is going on the open market: yours for £10 million. **CB**



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MADE BY **HEART**

New York's hottest restaurant is about to carve up the London social scene

An exclusive interview with American mega-chef Daniel Humm as he opens Davies And Brook this month at Claridge's

Story by **Bill Prince**

How do you turn a great restaurant into a world beater? You find its muse. "One of the first reviews of Eleven Madison Park was really positive," recalls owner and chef Daniel Humm. "But one of the lines was, 'I wish this place had a little more Miles Davis.' So we started researching Miles and we realised how groundbreaking he was and how every album was almost like the beginning of a new genre." Thus inspired by the titan of 20th-century jazz, Humm and his brigade would take their art deco dining room, carved from the historic lobby of the MetLife building in New York's Flatiron District to three Michelin stars and top spot of the 2017 World's 50 Best Restaurants list.

As Humm's career took off, so has the need for new muses. The restaurants that he and former business partner Will Guidara opened with NoMad Hotels are underscored by The Rolling Stones, while Made Nice, a counter-service spot, is represented by jazz musician and bandleader Jon Batiste. This month, the Swiss-born chef opens Davies And Brook in Claridge's, where Radiohead will serve as its musical personification.

"Our musical inspirations are very much inward facing. It's not something the guests will know," explains Humm, on a brief visit to London to oversee the transformation of the hotel's main dining room (last occupied by Simon Rogan's Fera). Nevertheless, it's clear that this time the choice is personal. "Claridge's has obviously been part of many people's lives and stories, but it's also been a very big part of mine. It's 25 years since I worked here as a prep cook. And when I worked here all those years ago, Radiohead had *Pablo Honey* out and that was my album."

In addition to establishing its musical mood music, Humm assigns each restaurant eleven words that define their approach; for Davies And Brook, which will combine fine dining with a cocktail lounge, the most important is "generational". "Because for me that's what Claridge's is about. I want to



'My four "fundamentals" aren't really friends... but that's the cuisine we want'

be the restaurant that can capture a lot of different generations."

And then there's the "four fundamentals" he's devised to direct not only the component of every dish but its purpose. "They are all equally important, but the first one is the most important," says Humm. "Firstly, the dish has to be delicious. And deliciousness isn't something you should have to think about. Then it has to be beautiful. I'm looking for an effortless beauty, a minimalist beauty. The third one is creativity.

I really want to add something to the conversation; it could be a new technique, an element of surprise or a new flavour combination, but it has

to add something. And the last one is intention. There has to be a reason why we're doing this. There needs to be story and it needs to make sense. It can't just be a random thing.



Humm's signature duck with daikon and plum dish

"The four aren't really friends, but if we pay attention to all of them that's the cuisine we want. And in a weird way they have also become the way I want to live my life. I found my cuisine through it and I feel like I found myself through it. I want to live a delicious, beautiful, creative, intentional life."

Numerologists will doubtless have a field day; meanwhile, clued-in diners are keen to know how much of Eleven Park Madison will make it over the Atlantic. "We are bringing elements," says Humm, citing a signature duck with daikon and plum dish. Add the architects Allied Works, who did the 2017 refurb that featured in the Netflix series *7 Days Out*, and a deep bench of EMP talent, including chef de cuisine Dmitri Magi and bar director Leo Robitschek, and it's clear DAB (as Davies And Brook will surely become known) will keep the refinement while dialling up the accessibility. "Because that's what most people want these days. It's hard to be in a meal for four hours. How many times a year do you want that? I don't want it that often."

Maintaining an artful reticence surrounding EMP's bulging reservations book of starry admirers (Jimmy Fallon calls Humm a "genius") the chef's easy-going air and dressed-down demeanour belies a fierce determination. He quit school at 14 and took a job in a kitchen to finance competitive cycling (he quit following a crash) and attributes his current success (there's another project underway at 425 Park Avenue in New York to be unveiled next year) to another signature dish, solely comprising celery root and truffle.

"I've always tried to cook in a minimal way, but early on it was impossible. I'd put two things on a plate but think, 'No one is going to think that's life changing...' so I'd add a garnish and another element to impress. And then three years ago I created a dish for the first time, which was like, 'Wow. I think I've done it now.'" Since when, he says, it's all about "wanting to strip away more: fewer courses, less interaction with the server, a lot of the formality. Miles Davis said, 'Sometimes you have to play for a long time to be able to play like yourself.' That's really how I feel."

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Illustrated by Quentin Blake

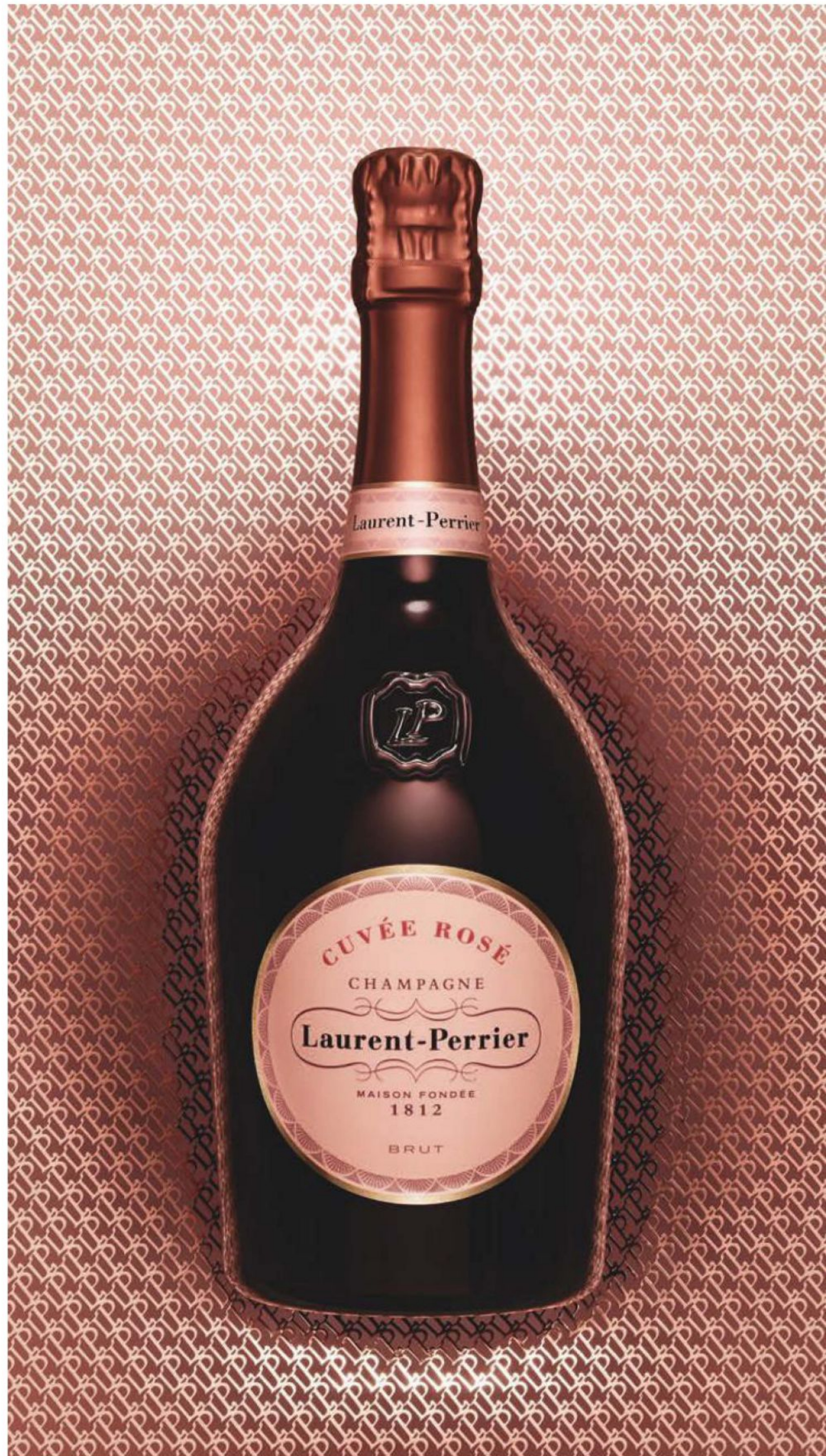
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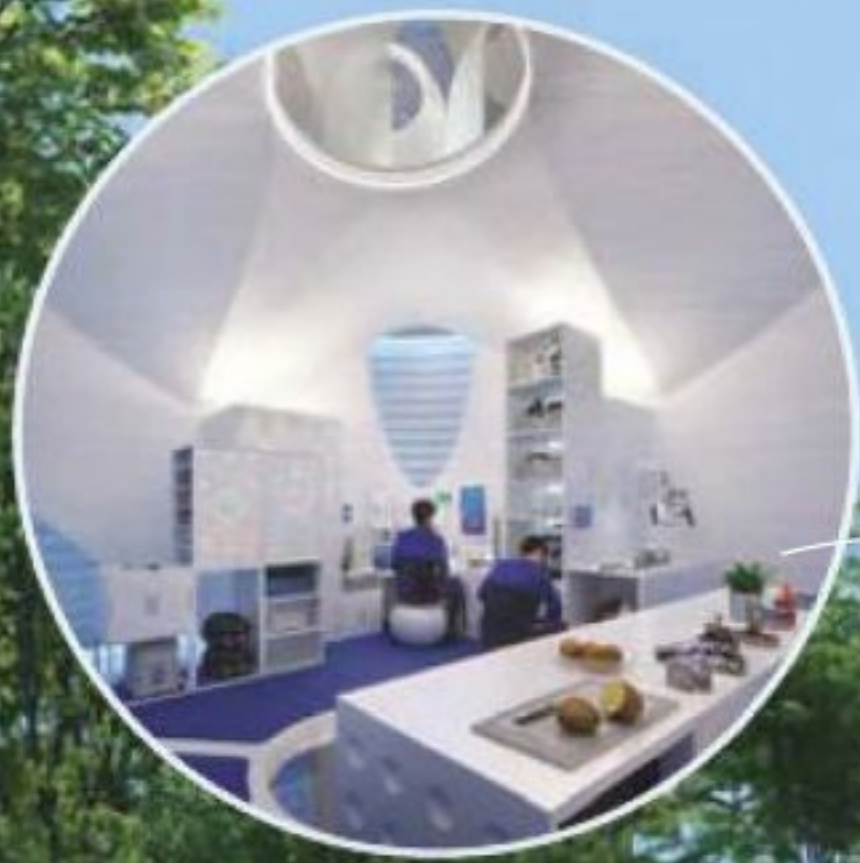
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drinkaware.co.uk
for the facts



The interior is spread over four levels, each with its own function: garage, kitchen, sleep and recreation. All have their own window plus circadian lighting to maintain the body's natural day and night rhythms.

Nasa takes its next step towards a manned Mars mission in 2020, when it sends a rover to the surface to "prepare for human exploration". Meanwhile, Elon Musk recently unveiled his prototype Starship, SpaceX's Mars rocket.

The pod's earthbound prototype, "Tera", will be 3-D printed from a biopolymer basalt composite. Made from corn and sugar cane, this is stronger than concrete but can be composted away at the end of its life.

The real pod will be 3-D printed on Mars using planet-based resources. In-situ construction is the only way to create space habitats - taking them from earth by rocket is not feasible.



LIFE ON MARS

Here's a sign we're in the future: serious architects are designing habitats for Mars. Take AI Spacefactory, which now has Nasa funding for its Marsha pod; book now to stay in its earthbound prototype (*pictured*) in Upstate New York from March 2020.

STAY IN THE TERA ECO-HABITAT IN UPSTATE NEW YORK. £142 PER NIGHT. AISPACEFACTORY.COM

From its origins as a ride-tracking app for cyclists, Strava has raised £34 million in funding and expanded to a breadth of other sports and exercises to reach more than 46m users – including one in six British adults and over half the Tour De France peloton. Cofounder and chairman Mark Gainey shares nine secrets of his success...

Lose the safety net

If you quit your job and have no source of income, you'd be amazed at how quickly you start to come up with business ideas. I had a year and a half from the moment I quit to when I knew I'd be out of money. Once you have that time, don't take the recruiter calls. Don't think about applying for another job. Keep the blinders on.

Begin by catering to a hyper-specific audience

We focused on one group: passionate cyclists. When we started to talk to them, we realised certain things about their experiences that were unique. They were big adopters of data, GPS devices and power meters. Cyclists like their gear. Then, frankly, we also saw no one was really paying attention to them.

Don't get arrogant, especially in tech

Oftentimes, here in the Valley, there's a level of arrogance that gets in the way of too many start-ups and good ideas. I wish there was a little more humility spread around some of the start-ups I see. There are dynamics that put undue pressure on early-stage companies here in the Valley that maybe you don't see elsewhere.

'Paralysis kills companies. The beauty of software is you can correct it pretty quickly'

The SECRETS of MY SUCCESS

Mark Gainey, cofounder of Strava

Follow in the footsteps (and tyre treads) of a tech trailblazer as he shares his insights from the heart of Silicon Valley

Story by **Thomas Barrie**



After quitting his job, Valley rider Mark Gainey (pictured) gave himself a year and a half to set up a new business. Social fitness app Strava was the result

For difficult decisions, 'bookending' helps

Take a situation and ask, "What are the two extreme [responses] to this particular challenge?" We know full well that neither of those extremes is the answer, but once we understand those – now we've corralled the issue – is there a compromise somewhere in the middle?

Make decisions, even if they're wrong

There's a quote from *Touching The Void* [when] Joe Simpson's been cut loose by his climbing partner, who's left him for dead in a crevasse. He says, "You've got to keep making decisions. If you don't make decisions, you're stuffed." Paralysis kills companies. The beauty of software is you can correct it pretty quickly – if a piece of software didn't work, we can put a bug fix out in a matter of hours.

Read, read, read

The online tech [news] space is interesting, though I don't dig in deep – it's [about] capturing the top headlines on The Verge or Business Insider. [And] I always have two books: one is on my iPad, which will be business related, and one is on my bedside table, which is just a hard-copy book, fiction of some kind.

It's more efficient to hire people with new skills than learn them yourself

When you're a kid who studies art history then goes to start software companies, you learn really fast: "I don't have the answers; let me just go find people who do. I can't code to save my life, so I've got to figure out how to hire engineers." Once you start to appreciate that's what a great team looks like, it's magic.

Give yourself time off thinking about work

When I was working on my first company, Kana, my ex-wife, Lisa, who is still a dear friend, used to joke that I had "KOB disease" – "Kana on the brain". Today, it would be "Strava on the brain". I might be sitting at the dinner table and somebody asks me a question and I did not hear any of the last five minutes because I was so engrossed in something at work. It really does consume you. That is really not healthy and it can infect everybody around you.

Don't accept venture capital prematurely

Often, early-stage companies chase venture capital too quickly and don't fully appreciate what kind of return they need to generate. With Strava, it wasn't until about two years in that we began to see an opportunity. There was a network effect inside Strava – cyclists inviting other cyclists to join – and we realised if we began to think about marketing strategies and had additional capital to invest in that, it would be interesting. The other thing we had was the ability to monetise: a premium version people could purchase. So we had the opportunity to use the capital and a story for the venture capitalists in which they could see the fundamentals of the business coming together.

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W

hat do you get if you combine the most popular character in the *Star Wars* universe, Sergio Leone's spaghetti westerns and Werner Herzog? Enter, *The Mandalorian*. The bounty hunter Boba Fett, who brooded his way through *The Empire Strikes Back* before being (unfairly in our view) dumped into the Sarlacc pit, is the coolest thing the uncool George Lucas ever dreamed up. Like his father, Jango, Boba Fett wore armour from the planet Mandalore and the anti-hero of the forthcoming new Disney+ show is another similarly equipped bounty hunter, setting out in a series of post-*Return Of The Jedi* adventures in the less salubrious corners of the galaxy (with strong echoes of the comic strip "Strontium Dog" from 2000 AD). Tantalisingly, the trailer had more Easter eggs than Asda in March. The best of these is the Mandalorian's sidekick, the droid IG-11, a throwback to evil robot IG-88 from *Empire*, while Herzog's mysterious and morally ambiguous role is tone perfect. It's just possible someone might be doing *Star Wars* right this time.

George Chesterton

THE MANDALORIAN IS ON DISNEY+ EARLY NEXT YEAR.

This is *NOT* BOBA FETT

(but trust us, that doesn't matter)

Disney's live-action *Star Wars* series has a \$12.5 million budget... per episode. And it's going to be the hottest show on television

Pedro Pascal leads *The Mandalorian*, itself the lead series in new subscription service Disney+



CHAPTER 2

JANSSEN POWERS, DIRECTOR
SVALBARD, NORWAY

LIVE IN THE OPEN

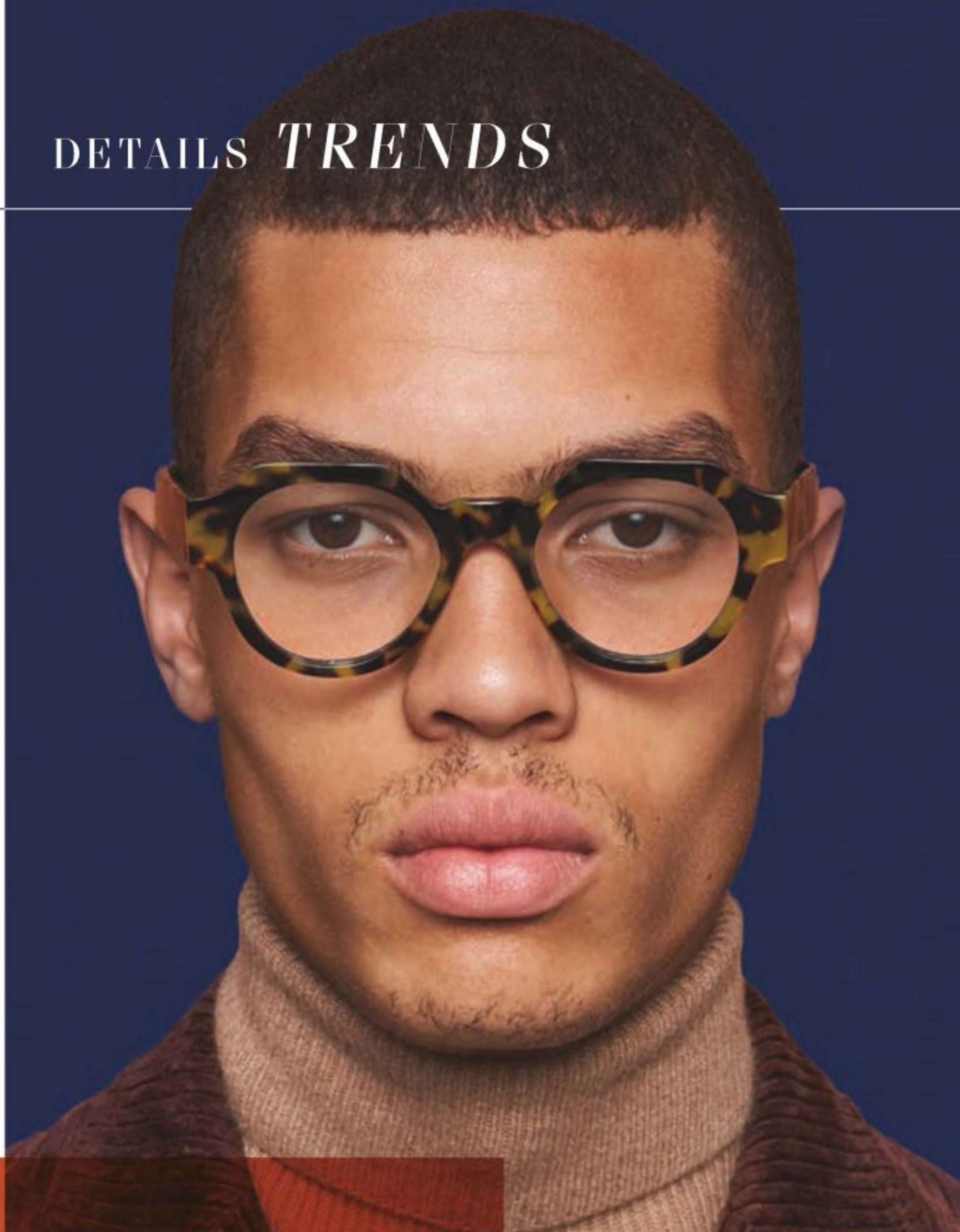
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DETAILS *TRENDS*

As with all things, eyewear trends come in cycles. One year it's all about round specs, next it's square. Most recently there was a big thing for ultra-angular cycling styles and before you know it aviators will be on the up again. One eyewear style we've seen surprisingly little of since the Seventies, however, is the classic dip bridge. Defined by a rounded square frame, finished with a high top bar and that noticeable indent, they were favoured by Michael Caine, who famously wore oversized dip-bridge frames in his role as Harry Palmer, while, later, Kurt Cobain was a regular exponent of rounded dip-bridges. When it comes to wearing your own, opt for smaller shapes in easy-wearing shades of tortoiseshell. Choose optical styles in winter, polarised lenses in summer and you'll blow the bloody doors off (wrong film, we know, but it's a strong line).



Glasses by **EB Meyrowitz**, £595.
ebmeyrowitz.co.uk

Rollneck, £1,240. Blazer, £2,570. Both by **Brunello Cucinelli**.
brunellocucinelli.com

Those SEVENTIES specs

When it comes to your reading gear this winter, it's all about a natty dip bridge and a lairy tortoiseshell hue

Story by **Teo van den Broeke**
Photographs by **Matthew Shave**

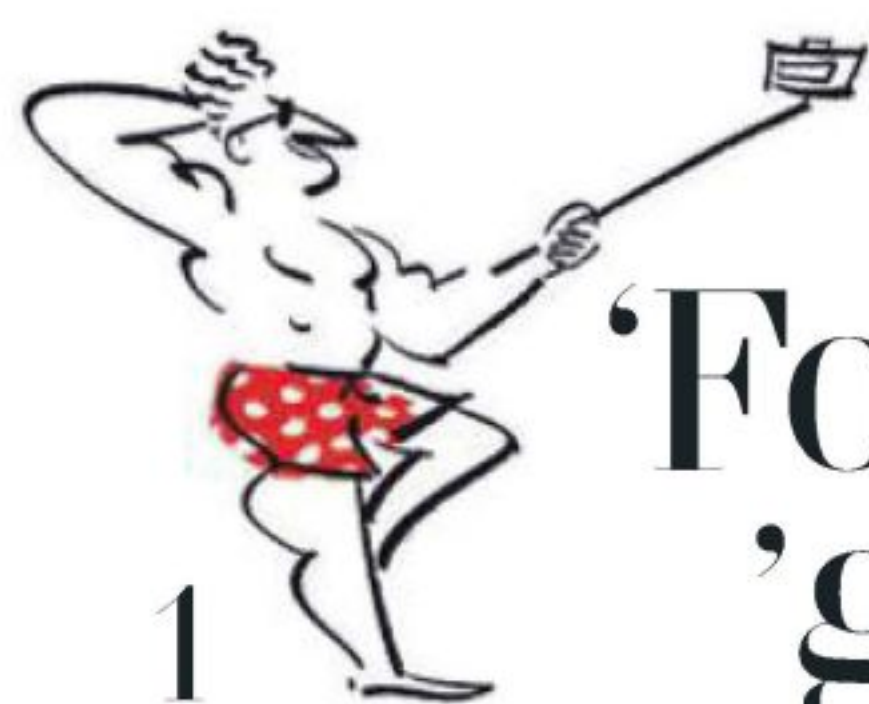


Glasses by **Tom Ford**, £215. tomford.co.uk

34 WORDS AND PHRASES THAT NO ONE SHOULD *EVER* USE

"Nice to e-meet you. Can we circle back on this after my annual leave, when I have more bandwidth?" *What?* From the verbal sludge that is the internet, boardroom and pop culture, conversational tics catch on like online memes and, as such, most are for lightweights. Don't ever let yourself utter these...

Story by **Thomas Barrie**



1

'For the gram'

You're allowed to use Instagram, but you're not allowed to "phraseify" it.

2 **'Phraseify'**

Only an idiot would use this clearly made-up word.



3

You're not a child, so stop talking like one.

4

'Mate'

When addressing a colleague, this is nakedly disingenuous, manipulative conviviality.

5

'It is what it is'

The posh "whatevs".

6

'Can I get a...'

You sound both entitled and pathetically impressed by American television shows.

7

'Exsqueeze me'

Really? *Wayne's World?* Really?

8

'Stan'

"We stan hard," tweets the Beyhive, missing the irony of Eminem's original point in "Stan": that it's not healthy to be an obsessive fan. If you really "stan" someone, you would chuck them in the boot of your car and hit the highway while chugging a bottle of vodka.

'On annual leave'

9

You haven't returned to your family after a tour of Afghanistan. You've gone to Formentera for a week. It's a holiday. Call it what it is.



10



'Learnings'

It's "lessons", for God's sake.

11

'I'm not sure I have the bandwidth for...'

You mean "time". You're not sure you have the time. You're not an AM radio or a dial-up internet connection.

'U OK, hun?'

12

So you've tweeted this at a politician. Newsflash: you can't patronise someone who doesn't know you exist.

13

'This'

As in, "This tweet is correct, but not just correct: profoundly true, morally righteous, this tweet will change your life if you only click on it, you feeble, simple mortal human." Please: go away. *That.*

14

'With all due respect'

Prepare to hear something containing absolutely no respect whatsoever.

15

'So random'

Congratulations. You sound like a 16-year-old.

16

'Tummy' or 'willy'

Creepy if you're over the age of 12.

17

'I'm good'

Not at speaking English, though.

18

'Brewski'
Get out.

19

'Thanks in advance'

Bit presumptuous, no?

20

'The Big Smoke'

It's not 1865. Just call it London. The same goes for "The Big Apple" or "San Fran". "Brum" is OK for Birmingham, though.

21

'Action that'

I think you mean "Do that."

22

'Small-batch' and 'micro' anything



You're not an artisan. You're a chap with a man bun who makes beer that tastes like grapefruit juice.

'Nice to e-meet you'

23

The fastest way to e-lose any e-respect your email's recipient might have e-had for you.

'I'm off on my holibobs...'

Please don't come back.



25

'And so, moving forward...'

Was there another direction you had in mind? If you've figured something out that the rest of us haven't, we're all ears.

26

'Curated'

Unless you're talking about an exhibition, there is no context in which this should be heard. Ever.

27

'Circle back'

Stop pestering me.

28

'Fearless'

Unless you're actually in combat, this is meaningless and actually rather offensive.

29

'Adulting'

What do you want, a gold star because you did your tax return?

30

'Yeah/no'

People who acknowledge your question and then immediately say they're not interested. Can't you simply make up your mind?

31

'Thread 1/[insert end number here]'

Wasn't the original point of Twitter to keep things pithy and succinct? If you're regularly writing 30-tweet screeds, you're a) probably using the wrong platform and b) absolutely insufferable.

32

'I feel like...'

The millennial, nonconfrontational alternative to "I think". It's OK to think. You should try it.

33

'It's really wearable'

It's an item of clothing. That's the point.



34

'Blessed'

Oh, shut up.

A SOUND investment

Brilliant connectivity, smart and stylish – the Powerbeats Pro by Beats has everything you want from your go-to headphones

Story by **Charlie Burton**
Photograph by **Benedict Morgan**

In this age of 3-D printing, 5G networks and missions to Mars, it seems strange – scrap that, ridiculous – that so many headphones are so utterly rubbish. They promise wireless connectivity, but they keep losing their connection with your phone. They promise a comfortable fit, only they look absolutely dreadful. They claim to sound terrific, except, well, we'd beg to differ.

So when a pair of buds such as the Powerbeats Pro by Beats come along, they immediately become go-tos simply because they do exactly what you want them to do – and they do those things really well. They've garnered such a following, in fact, that some of their new colourways (*pictured*) have become rarities.

Designed for athletes, the totally wireless Powerbeats Pro have won plaudits for their sound and offer an immense nine-hour run time off a single charge (plus there's another two full charges in the case). What's more, as Beats is owned by Apple, these 'phones take advantage of some AirPods star turns: zippy, reliable connectivity, say, and smart play and pause when you put them on or remove them. Throw in water resistance, easy controls and a sleek design and it's easy to understand the hype. We'll fight you for a blue pair.



Jumper, £1,240.
Hat, £645. Both by
Ermenegildo Zegna.
zegna.co.uk

Thirst TRAPS

Less Grizzly Adams, more Fargo of the future, these shearling-lined hats are an on-head upgrade

When Miuccia Prada first had oversized trapper hats on her SS19 runway, we weren't convinced – heavy-duty headwear for summer is a big ask. Fast-forward to winter and we can't get enough of them. The best are at Milanese brand Ermenegildo Zegna, where the rugged-yet-soft masculine style fits with its new "What Makes A Man" campaign, fronted by the most modern of men, Mahershala Ali. Wear with tailoring for full *Dr Zhivago* effect, or go *Uncle Buck* with an oversized coat and a cigar. Your call.

Story by **Teo van den Broeke**
Photograph by **Matthew Shave**

Grooming: Asahi Sano at Caren Model Cory at Select

BECOME THE HUNTER...

Get caught up on the best trapper hats

1. By **Paul Smith**,
£150. paulsmith.com
2. By **Bally**,
£230. bally.co.uk
3. By **Prada**,
£335. prada.com



The sound of the UNDERGROUND

Lou Reed's lyrics, now collected in a new edition, reveal an outsider's mind never blunted by time

Story by Jon Savage

Lou Reed was ambitious from the start. He could taste longevity. In December 1966 – the same year he recorded the eleven songs that would be released on the *Velvet Underground & Nico* album – he published an essay in the Pop Art issue of *Aspen* magazine that set out his vision for his place in American culture: “Everything was dead. Writing was dead. Movies were dead. Everybody sat like an unpeeled orange. But the music was so beautiful.”

The piece was punctuated with snatches of pop lyrics: Lee Dorsey's “Ya Ya”, Ritchie Valens' “Donna”, The Jaynetts' “Sally, Go ‘Round The Roses”. Reed affirmed his adolescent inspirations – “Alan Freed, the great father, clipped, fast speech and table pounding. The Jesters, Diablos, Coney Island Kids, Alicia And The Rockaways” – at the same time as he attacked poets such as Robert Lowell and the existing hierarchy of literary value: “The only decent poetry of this century was that recorded on rock-and-roll records. Everybody knew that.”

The fact he was bothering at all with figures such as Lowell and Ezra Pound in an article about pop culture betrayed his writerly aspirations, yet the records he cited as inspirations were lyrically minimal broadcasts from the first age of superpop innocence, breathy and sincere doo-wop songs that stopped time. “Sally, Go ‘Round The Roses” is a perfect example: a huge 1963 hit in the US that rises and falls in a tide of loss, longing and regret. Andy Warhol was fascinated by it too.

Reed was university educated, a fan of taboo-busting gay writers such as James Purdy and William Burroughs, and a disciple of poet-novelist Delmore Schwartz. When he began writing song lyrics in earnest during 1965, in the wake of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan, pop's first flush of innocence had gone. Competitive and driven, Reed had to find a niche, and his breakthrough was to introduce into the pop arena the terse, hard-boiled style of Raymond Chandler and the outsider sensibility of the exposé writers.

At the same time, Reed was fascinated by the terse simplicity of superpop lyrics, pared-down haikus that privileged emotion and

sound above all overt meaning. Many of his songs hinge on the way pop can change your life, most famously on the Velvet Underground song “Rock & Roll”: “Then one fine mornin’ she puts on a New York station / You know she don’t believe what she heard at all / She started shakin’ to that fine, fine music / You know her life was saved by rock’n’roll.”

But however much he aspired to simplicity, he couldn't unlearn what he knew. One of his earliest songs, “I Found A Reason”, is a beautiful doo-wop tribute with the self-mocking line: “I’ve walked down life’s lonely highways / Hand in hand with myself.” Is it a piss-take, a sincere tribute or an acknowledgement that he knows too much to write “Sally, Go ‘Round The Roses”? No doubt all three. Reed would forever struggle with the tension between

‘I have my share of street smarts, but I’m not a rat from the streets by any means’

pop's demotic terseness and the word blizzards that issued from his overheated brain.

On 1967's *The Velvet Underground & Nico*, Reed began as he meant to continue, as a detailed chronicler of his hometown. New York saturates the album: the locations of drug deals (Lexington 125 and Union Square); the sensibility of Andy Warhol's 47th Street Factory (“Femme Fatale”, “All Tomorrow's Parties”); the various means used by New Yorkers to escape the harshness of their environment (“Heroin”, “Venus In Furs”). These desperate dreams reflect an extreme environment.

Reed documented lives at society's margins with a humane precision he took from John Rechy and Hubert Selby Jr. As Martin Scorsese writes in his introduction to Reed's *I'll Be Your Mirror: The Collected Lyrics*, out on 7 November, “He actually spoke and sang in the voice of the lowest of the low, the dregs, the ‘least among us’ – the people looking to follow the first thing that gives them the right to be. He spoke the language of people with nothing but their own humanity, and he elevated them.”

The book's title, *I'll Be Your Mirror*, reflects one of Reed's most resonant lyrics. Initially sung by Nico, it's a pretty, almost courtly love song that oscillates between tenderness (“I’ll be the light on your door to show that you’re home”) and a sudden, unvarnished truth (“When you think the night has seen your mind / That inside you’re twisted and unkind”). The key line, however, is “I’ll be your mirror / Reflect what you are, in case you don’t know.” There is a veiled threat there: you’re going to know, whether you like it or not.

It was one of Warhol's favourite songs. Just as his highly constructed appearance and obtuse manner threw the media's curiosity back at itself, Warhol's increasingly provocative artworks acted as a mirror to America. His high-Sixties paintings and silk screens depicted, in a brutal and deceptively simple manner, sex, death, crime, celebrity, media, money, mass production. Critics were confused. Were they a put-on? Were they a critique? Or were they just there? But the mirror does not moralise. It merely reflects.

Reed wasn't judging the junkies or sado-masochists or rat-run street kids he wrote about. He was just trying to enter their heads. As he wrote in 2000's *Pass Thru Fire*, “I have always thought my lyrics went beyond reportage and took emotional albeit nonmoral stances. In the early lyrics this was often seen as a celebration or glorification of what was commonly seen as sin. Sinful behaviour and actions going unpunished. That this occurred in a recording was of itself thought sinful. A recorded cauldron of sin.”

Although their close working relationship lasted just 18 months, the Warhol association stuck to Reed like glued silver. They were both seen as wilfully exposing a depraved, decadent side of American life: drug-taking, homosexuality, perceived deviant behaviour of all kinds. This caused him any number of problems after his solo success in the early Seventies; there was always confusion between Lou Reed the writer and Lou Reed the star, required by his audience to live out his lyrics.

Rock requires the illusion of authenticity, yet, initially, Reed was more observer than autobiographer. His early songs are full of >>

DETAILS *ICON*

Mick Rock shot Reed in a look uncannily predictive of punk. Only the painted nails pointed back to glam



>> characters: Teenage Mary, Uncle Dave, Margarita Passion, Seasick Sarah, Beardless Harry, Waldo Jeffers et al. Yet, after the *Transformer* and *Sally Can't Dance* albums were hits, he found himself acting out the drugged, cynical, vicious and self-destructive characters of his observational songs. The person became the persona, with unhappy results.

In the Velvet Underground days at the Factory, Reed had affected a street-punk style – leather, tousled hair à la Arthur Rimbaud, sunglasses after dark. When he went solo this relaxed somewhat – in 1973 he was sporting long curls and was rather fat – but by 1974 he was rail thin, with skinny jeans and cropped blond hair, in which, at one stage, he had sculpted an Iron Cross. This was the look he brought to Britain in May for a series of confrontational shows that inspired punk-era figures such as Bernard Sumner.

By then he was back on amphetamines and living with his transgender partner, Rachel. His headlong dive into the dangerous extremes of the demimonde was reflected in the lyrics for *Sally Can't Dance*, an R&B album full of vicious kiss-offs (“Baby Face”, “Ennui”) and a scathing, albeit veiled attack on his parents, “Kill Your Sons”: “All your two-bit psychiatrists are giving you electric shock.”

In an extraordinary 1975 session, Mick Rock photographed Reed in a look uncannily predictive of punk: speed-skinny, dark sunglasses, messed-up hair, see-through plastic coat and string mohair sweater – very like those being produced in Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood’s shop at 430 King’s Road. Only the painted nails pointed back to the glam era. Shortly, Reed would release his most delicious provocation, *Metal Machine Music*, four sides of feedback drones explained in the sleeve note: “My week beats your year.”

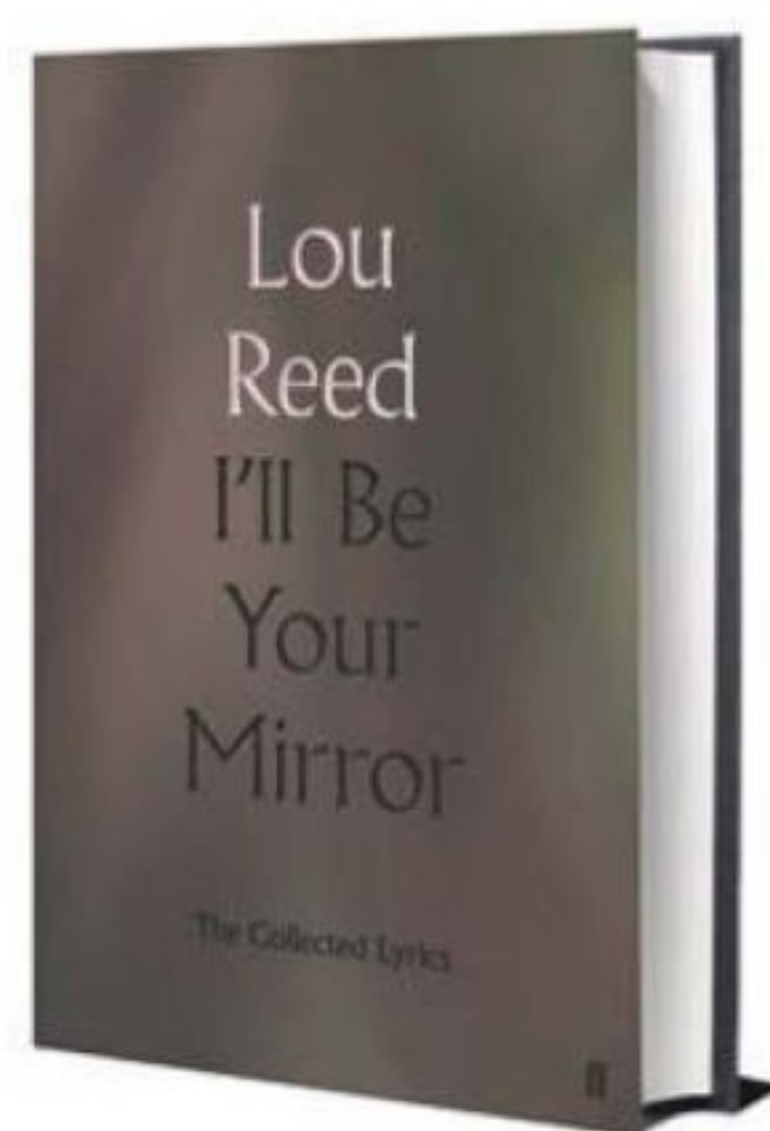
Thus did Reed deal with the demands of the industry. Success was usually followed by failure – the release of the grim *Berlin* after *Transformer* – or deliberate self-sabotage: *Metal Machine Music* after the top-ten *Sally Can't Dance*. While his extremes of fashion slowly evened out, this polarity continued to the end of his first solo cycle, when in 1978 he released the unrelenting verbal provocations of the live *Take No Prisoners* album and his first mature masterpiece, *Street Hassle*.

A three-part song cycle, *Street Hassle* was Reed’s answer to his own question: “What would happen if Raymond Chandler wrote a rock’n’roll song?” Beginning in a gay pick-up and passing through an accidental overdose, the song concludes with some of Reed’s most heart-rending lines: “You know, some people got no choice / And they can never find a

voice / To talk with that they can even call their own / So the first thing that they see / That allows them the right to be / Why they follow it / You know, it’s called bad luck.”

For the next ten years, most of the Eighties, Reed sweated longevity. Every successful pop performer has to face it at some point: the matter of survival. He was a prestige artist but not a big seller: only one of his four RCA albums would hit the top 50 in the US album charts. His solution was to straighten himself up in every sense: as well as temporarily disavowing the wild side and his bisexual flirtations, he gave up excess in drink and drugs.

He began to see himself as a professional, at one remove from his all-consuming persona. Leather had been part of his trademark look from the start and is mentioned



I'll be Your Mirror: The Collected Lyrics (Faber & Faber, £25) is out on 7 November

frequently in his songs as a New York staple: “Sister Ray”, “Tell It To Your Heart”, “Romeo Had Juliette”, “Halloween Parade” and “Rock Minuet” all have references to leather jackets, belts, drags, vests. Leather is all over his final album, *Lulu* – a collaboration with Metallica based on Frank Wedekind’s two “Lulu” plays.

Reed wore leather jackets all his life. “He could take his fame off like one of his leather jackets,” writes his widow, Laurie Anderson, in her introduction to *I'll Be Your Mirror*, “or he could decide to use the pose as a weapon.” As Reed admitted upon the release of his 1982 album, *The Blue Mask*, “Some people like to think I’m just this black-leather-clad person in sunglasses. And there’s certainly that side of me; I wouldn’t want to deny my heritage. But while I have my share of street smarts, I’m not a rat from the streets by any means. I always wanted to be a writer, and I went to college to prepare myself for it.”

Part of that process involved deep-mining his past, in songs such as “Families”. Apolitical in his time with The Velvet Underground – “There are problems in these times / But, ooh, none of them are mine” – he

began to address the outside world. As he sings on “The Original Wrapper” (from 1986’s *Mistrial*), “We were watchin’ the news, the world’s in a mess / The poor and the hungry, a world in distress / Herpes, Aids, the Middle East at full throttle.”

Later in the decade, he returned to the New York demimonde with a new focus. For three albums in a row – *New York*, *Songs For Drella* and *Magic And Loss* – he cast an unflinching gaze on his own city at the time of Aids, and loss and death in general. Some of the songs on 1992’s *Magic And Loss* were prompted by the death of his close friend Doc Pomus. On his collaboration with John Cale, 1990’s *Songs For Drella*, he addressed his complicated feelings for Andy Warhol.

Warhol died unexpectedly in February 1987, leaving matters between the pair unresolved. The artist had picked up The Velvet Underground when they were nothing, but the break in 1967 had been bitter. Reed’s attitude when they subsequently met was inconsistent, while Warhol nurtured resentments that spilled out for all to see in 1989’s *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, which contained several unflattering references to his former protégé, including, “I hate Lou Reed more and more.”

Reed carried that ambivalence into his song cycle, acknowledging on “Work” Warhol’s kindness and practical influence: “Sometimes when I can’t decide what I should do / I think what would Andy have said / He’d probably say, ‘You think too much / That’s ‘cause there’s work that you don’t want to do.’” Yet *Songs For Drella*’s final track, “Hello It’s Me”, directly addresses his old mentor: “But I have some resentments that can never be unmade / You hit me where it hurt I didn’t laugh / Your Diaries are not a worthy epitaph.”

Reed died in October 2013. An internal consistency is always admirable in a writer and among his last albums were adaptations of two literary classics, Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Raven* as well as the “Lulu” cycle. “I think of myself as a writer. I operate through a rock’n’roll format,” he stated in the Eighties, and he succeeded in applying literary standards – wide emotional and verbal vocabulary, psychological depth – to the demands of pop: short songs, catchy hooks and mass success.

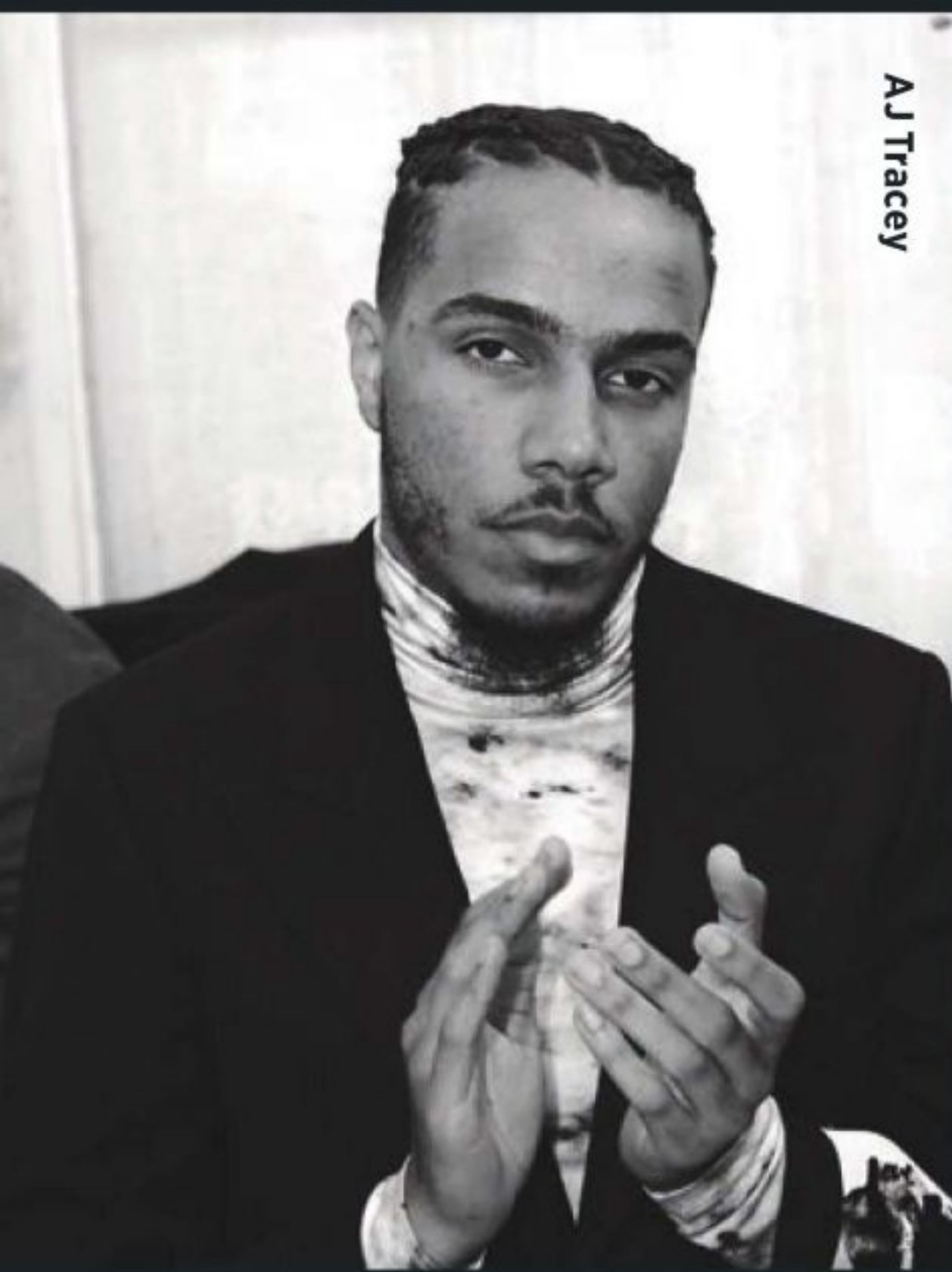
Lou Reed was mutable and contradictory: he could be curmudgeonly, pompous, empathetic, tender, vicious, endlessly inventive and very funny. “Passion – realism – realism was the key,” he wrote in the sleeve notes to *Metal Machine Music* and he mapped marginal lives with such precision that his lyrics add up to a social history of time and place.

You could say that he got there.

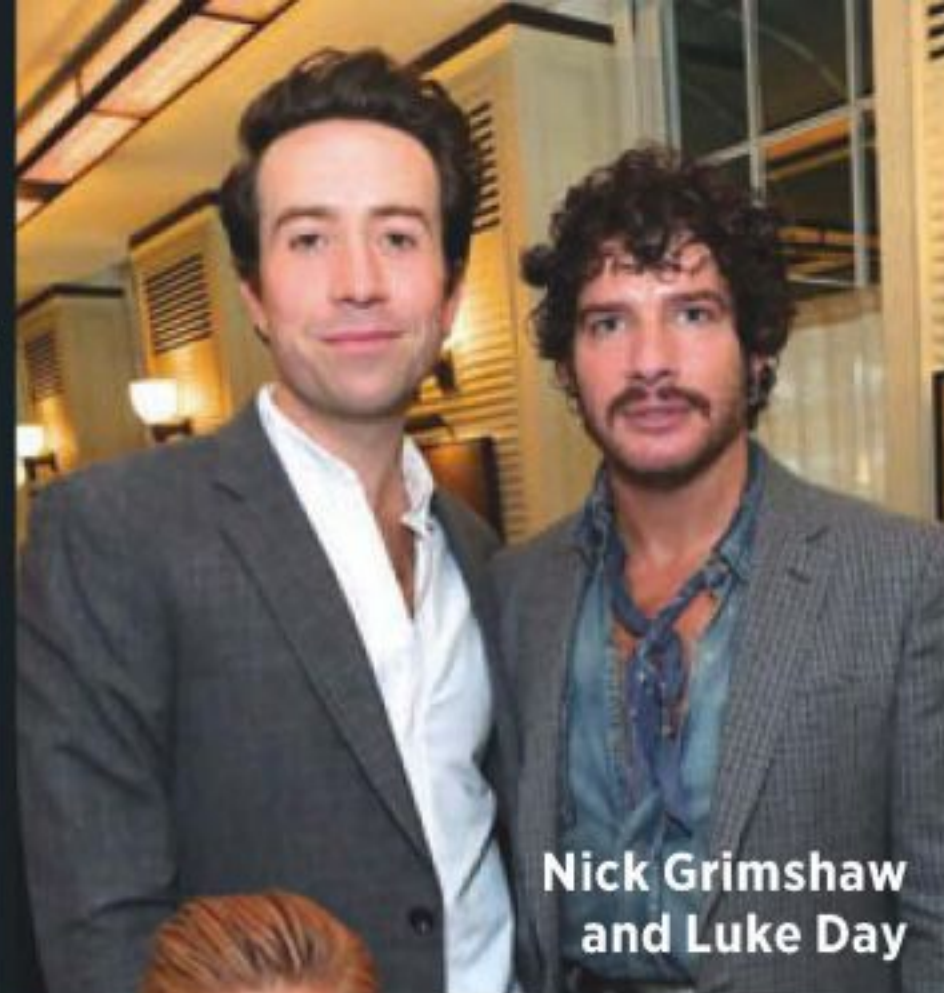
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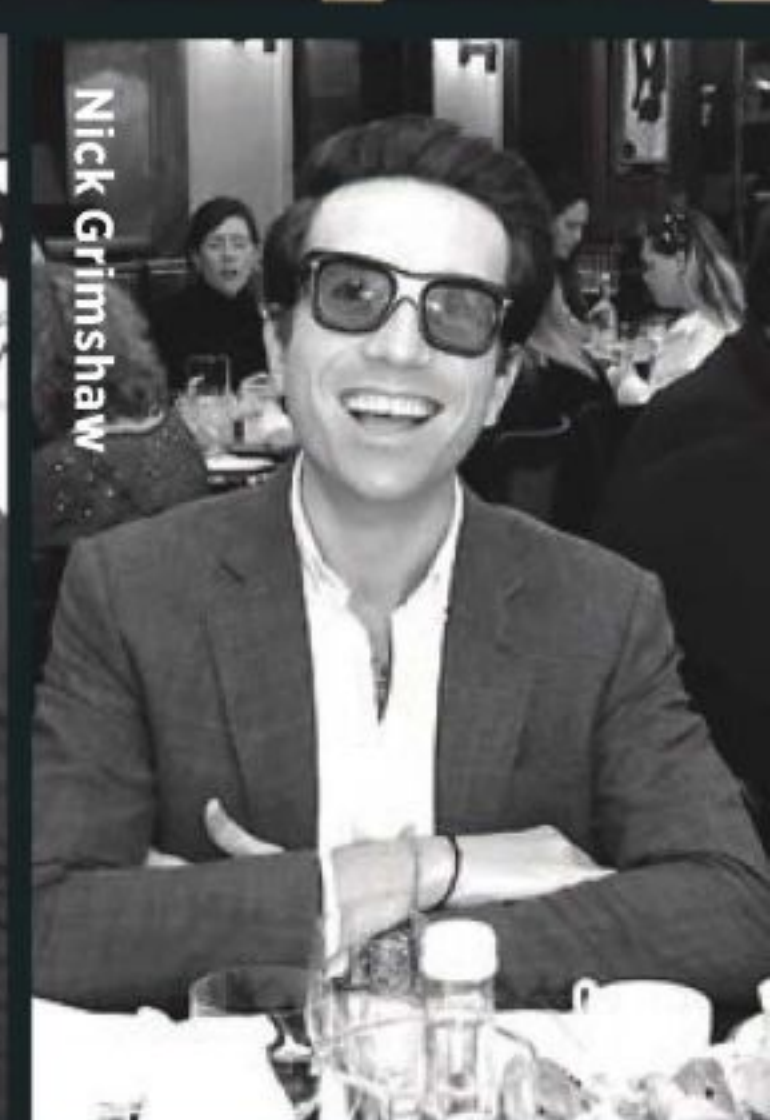
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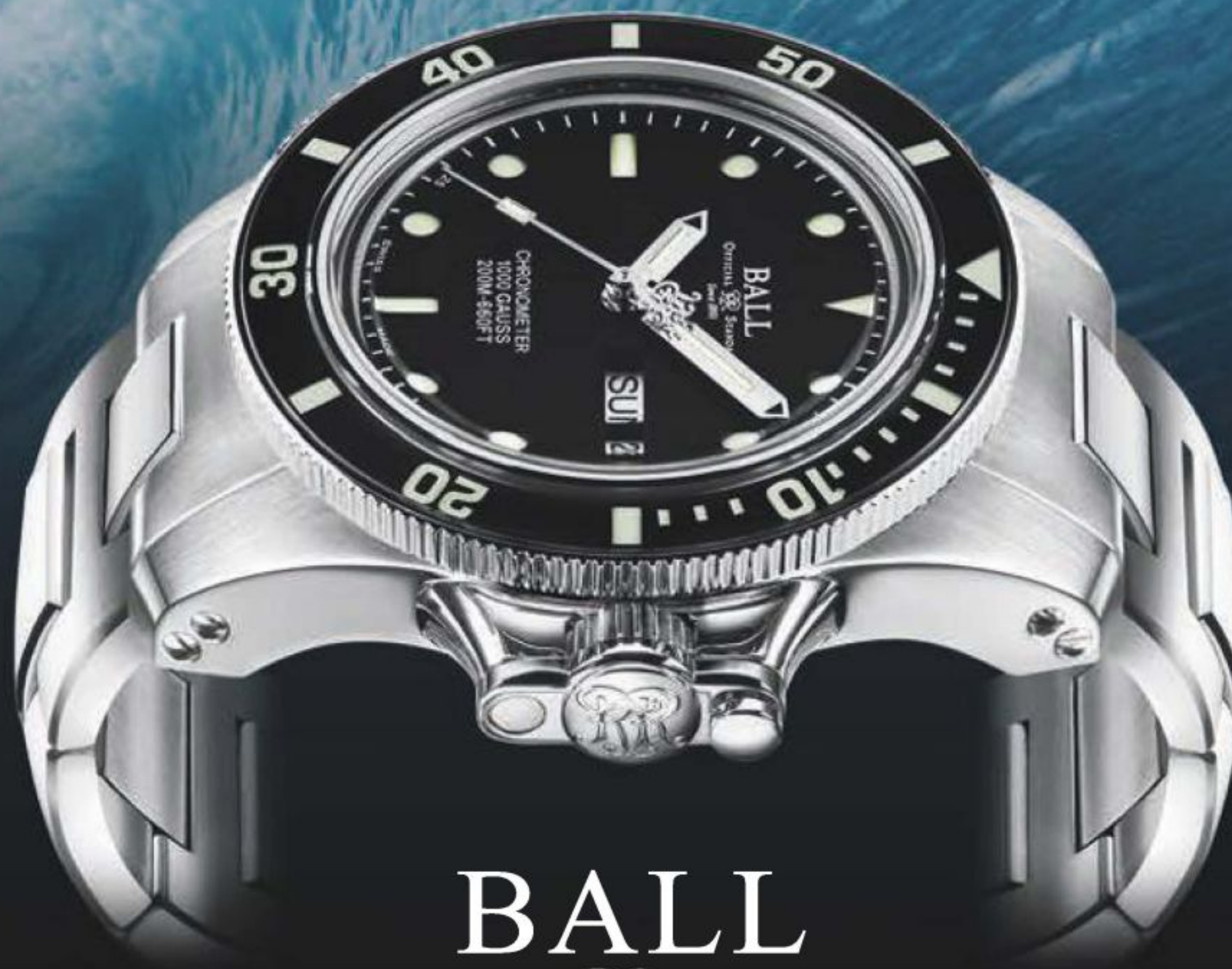
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WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

SIR ELTON JOHN

It's been a long, long time coming, but the Rocketman has finally relented. In his new autobiography, *Me, Sir Elton* tells his extraordinary life story, from his humble origins in Pinner to pop superstardom and hanging out with presidents. In an exclusive interview, he talks sex, old scores and swear boxes

Story by **Dylan Jones**

Photograph by **David LaChapelle**

SIR ELTON JOHN



Sir Elton John announced his last ever tour, Farewell Yellow Brick Road, in January 2018

You can tell a lot by the title of an autobiography. Some are obviously deliberately self-aggrandising, some display an unnecessary obsession with wordplay, while others try to

suggest a kind of monolithism. In the world of entertainment, they tend to be even worse – some of the biggest offenders are *My Booky Wook* by Russell Brand, for instance, or *Are You There, Vodka? It's Me, Chelsea* by Chelsea Handler, *All You Need Is Ears* by George Martin or *Hitch-22* by Christopher Hitchens.

Two of the best music autobiographies of recent years have wildly different titles. *Life*, by Keith Richards, is a suitably grand moniker for a suitably grand book, while *Chronicles: Volume One* is the rather pretentious title of the brilliant Bob Dylan memoir (a title made even more annoying because it hints there might be sequels).

Me, the much-anticipated autobiography of Sir Elton John, not only has an appropriately clever and almost-mythical title, but it also joins *Life* and *Chronicles* in being one of the best music books you'll ever read, a searingly honest and laugh-out-loud funny tear through one of the biggest lives and most successful careers pop has ever seen. Few music autobiographies do their subjects complete service (a lack of self-awareness often being a unifying factor), but *Me* is not just a fitting testament to Elton's life, it's also unrelentingly enjoyable. As far as I'm aware there are only two other autobiographies that share the title: one being Katharine Hepburn's 1991 memoir (which is somewhat ruined by its subhead: *Stories Of My Life*) and the other being the self-penned book by the Alan Rickman character in the 2012 remake of the Sixties classic *Gambit* (the reread being one of the worst films ever made).

Elton's *Me* was actually written by *GQ*'s former music editor Alexis Petridis and he has done a terrific job in capturing Elton's voice, in much the same way that James Fox captured Keith Richards' voice in *Life*. The book moves effortlessly from Elton's teenage years in suburban Pinner to sudden, extraordinary fame in the US, right through the sex, the drugs, the rock'n'roll, the clothes, the addictions (all of the above and more), the lawsuits, the tantrums, the tiaras, the lot. Having been through treatment (he had an almost unparalleled fondness for cocaine in the Seventies and Eighties), Elton already knows that in order to continually move forward in life he has to consistently tell the truth about his past. This makes him

a terrific interviewee, as you can usually ask him anything without making him flinch; this honesty also gives *Me* a richness you don't often find in books of this nature. Only once does the narrative feel clunky, when Elton suddenly goes from mawkish North London troubadour to internationally renowned rock star. In real time this took a lot longer than the two-page transition in the book.

But this isn't a ghostwriter's book. It's Elton's book. And it's difficult to imagine it ever being told more effectively than it is here. Anyone who has had the good fortune (and, on the odd occasion, the misfortune) to meet Elton will know that the term larger-than-life could have been invented for him, and his larger-than-life personality is squeezed brilliantly into this book. I read *Me* avidly over a weekend and would disappear early from lunch, slip away from the television and bow out of walks with the family in order to curl up with it once more, just to find out who Elton would shout at next. One of Elton's most engaging traits is not just his

'I used to keep a diary but it was just, "Saw Ringo for lunch, bought a Rolls-Royce, blah, blah, blah"'

ability to laugh at himself, it's also his self-awareness. You might think he wouldn't want to address his sexual proclivities, his relentlessly foul mouth (when I asked him once if he had heard that a well-known tabloid columnist had just died, he shot back with, "Oh, yes. I gather she died of c***ishness"), his appalling short temper or his penchant for shopping on an industrial scale, but, trust me, Elton knows more incriminating stories about himself than anyone and they're all here in glorious, granular, often cinematically hi-res detail.

Elton wanted to do only two interviews to publicise the book: one for the BBC and another for *British GQ*. The interview took place in his holiday home outside Nice on Friday 30 August.

Dylan Jones: You must have been asked dozens of times to write your memoirs. Why did you finally decide to do it now?

Sir Elton John: It's the right time. I'm 72 years old and I thought it was a good time to reflect on my life as it's in pretty good shape now. I'm doing the farewell tour, *Rocketman* has come out, so it made sense to follow all that with the book. I didn't want to do a book

when I was 30 or 40, because it wouldn't have been as honest as it is now. This is the time in my life in which I'm the happiest, when I feel most contented. Originally the book was going to be written by [the journalist] Ingrid Sischy, who unfortunately passed away; it would have been a much more analytical book and it wouldn't have been so humorous and personal. I modelled it on *The Moon's A Balloon* by David Niven as I thought that was such a great book. It was full of information, full of his personal memoirs and also incredibly funny. There's been so much humour in my life, and I wanted to reflect that. When I started thinking about my life I thought, "Oh, my God, how did I do all this?" From a boy in Pinner with no idea of becoming who I became.

DJ: I assume you couldn't have written the book while your mother was still alive.

EJ: That's right, as it would have been too painful for her. I never responded to all the things she said in the tabloids and all the other things she did, so I thought it was time to address them, to tell a couple of home truths, and it wouldn't have been appropriate. She died at a good age, 92 [in 2017], and we reconciled in as much as we could before she died and I'm glad we did. We had her funeral at the house and it was very emotional. I cried. I was very emotional because she was my mother. Unfortunately we grew apart, but families do that. The last six or seven years of my relationship with my mother were pretty awful, and it wasn't great before that. But it was very cathartic for me to write about it.

DJ: You're far more benign about people than you could have been.

EJ: I wanted to settle a few scores and I did with Tina Turner. I have nothing but love for Tina, but when she roasted me on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* – she roasted me uphill and down – it wasn't fair, although I never said anything at the time. I thought when all this has settled down, I would say exactly what happened and set the record straight. I didn't want to write a book where I was horrible about people. I wanted to write a joyful, honest, funny book. The older you get, you start to put things into perspective. I've done that with my father, I've done that with [former lover and manager] John Reid, I've done that with all the people I had grievances against. In fact, I don't have any grievances concerning my father and I'm very happy to have met his wife, his widow, who came to the show with my half-brothers and her grandchildren. Life's too short. You can't die hating people. It's the wrong thing to do. I wouldn't have got in touch with my mother at all had I not overheard someone >>



1968



1977



1972



1980



1987



1986

Clockwise from top left: Elton John's first publicity shot, London; with Andy Warhol, Paris; at the piano, London; onstage in Los Angeles; backstage with The Princess Of Wales, London; with husband David Furnish and son Zachary at the 21st Elton John Aids Foundation Oscar party, Los Angeles; onstage for the Farewell Yellow Brick Road tour, Dublin; with Peter Straker and Freddie Mercury; as The Pinball Wizard in Tommy; with France Gall and Michel Berger, Saint-Tropez; celebrating his 40th birthday in London



1993



1975



1977



2013



2019

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>> talking about their relationship with their father. In Alcoholics Anonymous there's a thing that says you can't change people; you have to accept them for who they are. And I thought if my mother died and I didn't reach out to her, I would feel terrible about it. So partly it was for me and, of course, it was for her too. I didn't want that on my conscience when she died, that I hadn't tried to reach out and give her an olive branch.

DJ: Having been through treatment and through rehab, where you are encouraged to be honest about your past and to be transparent, did that make it easier to be revelatory?

EJ: Of course. When I got sober, Alcoholics Anonymous gave me a set of rules on how to live my life. I always say people should read the AA's *Big Book*, because it's a guide to life, not just to staying sober. It has so many useful things in there. I could never have written this book unless I'd gone through what I've done with AA and becoming sober. I've been sober for 29 years and a lot of bad things happened in those 29 years, but you learn to deal with it. You don't have to run away and shut the door and take drugs and drink and scream and shout. You just have to deal with them on a regular basis. Shit happens to everybody in everyday life. Problems arise and I have the tools now to know how to deal with them, whereas before I didn't.

DJ: You talk a lot in the book about sex and drugs, a lot of which is entertaining, but there must have been some red lines you didn't cross. What did you leave out?

EJ: I didn't want to mention names and I think you can only go so far. *Rocketman* had sexual scenes in it and I thought they were graphic enough and they left some things to the imagination. Sex is like going on a beach and seeing people nude. It's like, "Oh, God. Put your clothes on!" Sex is something that is all about the imagination and the idea of sex and the fantasy of sex is sometimes so much greater than the sex itself. I didn't want to name names, otherwise the book would have been 450 pages longer! I think it's graphic enough and, with the drug stuff, I talk about it for a long time. In rehab they encourage you to write everything down and I was like, "Where do I start?" I was so constipated and so full of crap. And then when I started writing, and you will know this as a writer yourself, it's the most cathartic thing to do. I started and I couldn't stop. It was a wonderful way of starting my rehabilitation. I used to keep a diary, but I never kept personal thoughts, I was just like, "I saw Ringo for lunch, bought a Rolls-Royce, blah, blah, blah." So I thought the writing I did in treatment was really very helpful to me while I

was doing the book. But Alexis has done the most incredible job, because you would think it was my voice.

DJ: What was the process? How did you collaborate on the book?

EJ: Just like you and I sitting down here with a tape recorder for two or three hours every time, starting at the very beginning. The book was originally going to start at Dodger Stadium [in 1975], but that wouldn't have appealed to a lot of people, so we started when I was born. The incredible thing is I remembered so much about the early days, about being in Bluesology, because I had such a great time even though I was earning nothing. It's great to talk about those early days of English music, which paved the way for The Rolling Stones, for The Beatles and stuff like that.

DJ: You talk about your excessive years in a really engaging way, because you don't glorify them, but neither are you censorious or moralistic about them.

'The last years of my relationship with my mother were pretty awful, and it wasn't great before'

EJ: That's how it was. If I hadn't gone through what I did then I wouldn't have become the person I am now. So in a way, I'm grateful for those years of sex and drugs, although I despise looking back on them. I had a good time at the beginning, but at the end it was just awful. But if I hadn't have gone through them, I wouldn't be sitting here having the great life I have now. I would have never met David [Furnish]. I would never have had children. I spent 16 years getting fucked up and 29 years getting better.

DJ: You even manage to be quite nice about John Reid in the book.

EJ: Listen, I don't go around sticking pins in a voodoo doll. He said in the press that I ignore him. That's not true. I've seen him twice. I saw him at the airport very early in our separation in Nice and I went up and said hello. And I saw him in Saint-Tropez and I went up and said hello. I've always taken the high ground. So for him to say that I've ignored him is absolute nonsense. If he came over to me and said hello, I would be very nice. It's in the past. It's gone.

DJ: It's a big book and there is so much in it, but there must have been lots of encounters you didn't put in. Did you

have to kill any of your darlings because you didn't have the space?

EJ: There are hundreds of other encounters, hundreds of other people I could have written about. Take Eartha Kitt, for instance. I went to see her sing at a gay club in LA called Studio One. I'd always loved her and remembered her being carried on stage by all those guys on *Sunday Night At The London Palladium*. Before she went on stage that night she came up to me and said, "I've never liked anything you did except the Transylvania thing, by which she meant "Philadelphia Freedom". I mean, what do you say to that? [Another time] I remember the agent Sue Mengers invited us for lunch and she rang a friend of hers to ask, "Is there anything they don't eat, except pussy?" There were so many things I could have put in the book, but I didn't want it to be anecdote, anecdote, name-drop, name-drop.

DJ: It's obviously been an extraordinary year for you in so many different ways. When *Bohemian Rhapsody* became so successful, was there any pressure from the studio to make *Rocketman* more of a PG film?

EJ: I have to say, Paramount was incredibly on our side. There was talk about the PG thing, but I said I can't tell my life like that. What *Bohemian Rhapsody* did was to prolong Queen's career and it worked in a brilliant way because their catalogue is flying.

DJ: Have you seen it?

EJ: I couldn't see it. I couldn't watch it because I'm so close to Freddie. I've seen snippets of it and I thought that Rami Malek was fantastic, but being Freddie's dearest friend, I couldn't watch it.

DJ: How upset were you about the censorship by Russian distributors of the sex scenes in *Rocketman*?

EJ: Well, we didn't sit here and go, "You fucking c***s." When they cut out the bit with me and David and the family at the end of the film, I had to say something because the old Iron Curtain countries are becoming more and more homophobic. They said they did it to protect children, which is what the propaganda law in Russia is all about, because a lot of Russians think you're influenced to be gay rather than born gay. The film still has an 18 rating in Russia, even with all the cuts, so children can't get in to see it anyway. It is blatant homophobia and it's hypocrisy on every level.

DJ: When you were writing the book, did it make you think about your legacy?

EJ: I very rarely think about my legacy because I'm still working and I've got two years of touring to do. I've more or less finished the *Devil Wears Prada* musical, >>

SIR ELTON JOHN

>> there's another musical that is more or less finished and I'm going to record when I finish touring. I have a huge propensity for work. Even when I was at my lowest, the thing that kept me alive was working. I still toured. I still made records and that kept me alive. I didn't just sequester myself away, otherwise I wouldn't be here. So I loved music so much and I'm still the fan that I was when I was 15 or 16. And I think that is what keeps McCartney going, what keeps Springsteen going. And while they don't work as hard as I do, and they haven't toured as much as I have, they still love music. I always get pissed off when people criticise The Rolling Stones for still touring. They wouldn't say that about Muddy Waters. It's bullshit. The Stones go out there and they're probably playing as good now as they ever have. So I will still be heavily involved in music. I just don't want to do the travelling any more. I have two boys who need me and David needs me.

DJ: Have you seen the new *Lion King* film?

EJ: The new version of *The Lion King* was a huge disappointment to me, because I believe they messed the music up. Music was so much a part of the original and the music in the current film didn't have the same impact. The magic and joy were lost. The soundtrack

hasn't had nearly the same impact in the charts that it had 25 years ago, when it was the bestselling album of the year. The new soundtrack fell out of the charts so quickly, despite the massive box-office success. I wish I'd been invited to the party more, but the creative vision for the film and its music was different this time around and I wasn't really welcomed or treated with the same level of respect. That makes me extremely sad. I'm so happy that the right spirit for the music lives on with the *Lion King* stage musical.

DJ: One of the things I've always loved about you is your obsession with new music and also your obsession with what works commercially. You're looking at the charts all the time. But are there really any stars any more?

EJ: Good question. To be a star, you have to be a star for a long time and you have to do that by being a live performer. You can't be a star just by making records. That's not going to happen. To be a star, you have to

last for 50 years. You have to be a Barbra Streisand. You have to be a Paul McCartney. You have to be Sting. You have to be Fleetwood Mac. You have to be The Who. Christine And The Queens, in my opinion, is a huge star, but she hasn't cracked it yet commercially. The only real star at the moment is Lady Gaga. She could have a career like Barbra Streisand if she wanted to. She's got the ambition, she's got the talent coming out of every pore of her body, so it's up to her whether she wants it and I think she does want it.

DJ: Ed Sheeran?

EJ: I believe Ed will last, but he's got to broaden his one-man-band thing. I'd love to hear his songs played with a band, but

DJ: Stormzy?

EJ: He's amazing and he was terrific at Glastonbury. It was a very hard thing for him to do, because he was the opening headline act and he was a relatively new artist and he came on and he killed it. Dave is another young artist who is full in your face, but it's lyrically exactly what's happening.

DJ: When was the last time you saw

[David Furnish's 1997 Elton documentary] *Tantrums & Tiaras*?

EJ: I loved that show and still do. Every artistic person I know has a monster inside them and that monster always rises up on some occasion, so when David made that film about me it was completely honest. It's strange. When you go on a talk show

your persona clicks in. You become "Elton John". And when I finish a concert, I try to leave my persona on stage. But when you're on a talk show you can't let your guard down. *Tantrums* was me with my guard down and I just thought, "I'm going to put this out because you see exactly what I'm like." A lot of people thought it was a step too far and it would ruin my career, but I didn't care.

DJ: Me is often laugh-out-loud funny.

EJ: I've always had a good sense of humour and I wanted the book to reflect that. The tabloid press in

Britain can be infuriating, but in America the press turns everyone into Michael Jackson or Beyoncé, and they treat everyone like royalty. That would never happen in England. No way in a million years. I don't like some of the criticism and the outright lies that the tabloids write, but I'd rather put up with that than live in a world where they revere you 100 per cent of the time. Your shit does stink sometimes and to have it pointed out to you is not very agreeable, but it's important.

DJ: Being outspoken is obviously part of your DNA and that hasn't changed. Why was it important to you to lend your support to Harry and Meghan?

EJ: I'm very fond of both boys because of Diana and I think what they had to go through with the funeral was terrible. I'll never forget the funeral and seeing those boys having to walk behind the coffin for 45 minutes. I thought it was slightly inhuman, well, not slightly, incredibly. I don't see Harry and Meghan very often, but I'm there for >>



Elton John's first career-defining show at Dodger Stadium, Los Angeles, 1975

'You have to be a live performer. You can't be a star just by making records'

that's up to him. I told him that and he's very good and listens to me. For instance, he came to me after his first record and said, "Look, the record company want me to do a new album, but I've also been offered 80 dates with Taylor Swift. What should I do?" I said, "You should pick Taylor Swift because you'll be coming on to a half-empty audience who are just finding their seats. It's not your audience. It's a country audience, so it'll be incredibly hard work for you. But it will give you balls of steel." And he did it and he triumphed and he emailed me and he said, "Thank you. That was the right decision." So kudos to him.

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SIR ELTON JOHN

>> them. I completely support his views. We've worked together on numerous occasions, been to the International Aids Conference together, and while we're not in each other's back pockets, I have a certain feeling for him because he reminded me so much of Diana. I love the fact that he would walk into a room and disarm people straight away, which in all my life I've only seen about two or three people able to do. One was Bill Clinton, one was Princess Diana and the other is Harry.

DJ: What was President Macron like? You appeared to get on very well when he presented you with the Legion Of Honour.

EJ: He was very disarming. When we were at the Elysée Palace he made a 45-minute speech in English about my life and my career, my marriage to David, our children and he looked me straight in the eye all the time. It didn't feel like we were meeting the president of France. He was just a laugh, just fun and down-to-earth and very friendly. In fact, we kept everybody waiting for the ceremony for 25 minutes because we were having such a nice, normal exchange. Sometimes you go into those situations and they are steeped in protocol or very formal. The boys sat there asking questions and he was talking to all of us and so was Brigitte and they were just lovely people.

DJ: You're very good at reaching out to people who have attacked you or said something that you vehemently disagree with. Have you reached out to Trump?

EJ: I don't have any connection with Trump. But this year in his State Of The Union speech he pledged to end aids by 2030 in the US and beyond. That's something I really care about. America's PEPFAR programme, which was established by a Republican and has been sustained for the last 16 years, has done more to prevent global aids than any other initiative on the planet. The US's domestic HIV epidemic really needs help, so if there's more funding and political will for that, I'm for it. Of course, there are things about him that I disagree with totally. But personally, I feel that criticising and dragging people down can be very counterproductive to changing things for the better. If I'd taken that position over the last 25 years we would have fought with just about every leader in the world! A president who says that he wants to end aids is a starting point. You know, I go to America, I play in front of Trump supporters and Democrats and they all come together and appreciate the same thing. I remember playing in Ireland in the Seventies to both Catholics and Protestants and that was amazing. I don't get carried away too much with who I am. But what I do is make people enjoy the two-and-a-half

hours and forget everything else. And nowadays it's never been more important to try to forget what's going on.

DJ: Have you ever tried social media?

EJ: Oh, my word. Thank God I don't run my Twitter account. My career would have been over years ago.

DJ: What do you think of what's happening in Britain right now?

EJ: I'm appalled about what's happening in England. I don't think we've ever been in such a state. I mean, I'm 72 years old and I can't remember the country being in such a divided state between Brexit and non-Brexit. The whole country is affected and I don't see how



With the Duke and Duchess Of Sussex at the Lion King premiere, London, 2019

'Thank God I don't run my Twitter account. My career would have been over years ago'

we are going to come back from it. I mean, people are so violent about Brexit, both pro and con, and it's frightening and sad. Our leaders have divided us rather than united us and they've used lies to do it. Strong political leaders should be uniting people and bringing people together, but instead they've decided which side of the fence they're on and they've contributed to the divisiveness.

DJ: Did you vote in the referendum?

EJ: Yes, I voted to remain. I'm touring Europe all the time and people are going, "What the fuck is going on?"

DJ: What do you think of Boris Johnson?

EJ: Not much. I like him as a guy. I mean, he interviewed me for *GQ* years ago in Vegas. As a politician, I think he's been a liar at times. And, unfortunately, politicians do lie. I'm not

that naive, but now they believe it's OK to lie. It's become part of fake news. It's not only in America, Britain, it's everywhere, as despots are in charge of so many countries.

DJ: Do you have any relationship with the authorities in China?

EJ: Does anyone? I mean, everyone who goes to China gets vetted. It is the most bizarre experience when you're there, because it feels like a Western democracy, but it's not. Like you're staying in Western-style hotels and there are Starbucks and Rolex shops and it doesn't feel like a communist country, but the reality is everything's very strictly controlled. The first time I went, with Watford FC, the crowd weren't allowed to make a noise during the game. They had to remain silent. The second time I went, they were playing Madonna records at half-time.

DJ: Have you had a lot of people to stay this summer?

EJ: I reconnected with Pete Townshend, who I hadn't seen for years, and that was lovely, and Michael Stipe, who always comes here every year, and we've seen Bono and The Edge. Bono's son is in a band called Inhaler from Dublin and they're fucking amazing. And his son said, "Please don't tell the record company you're my dad." Lewis Capaldi came for lunch. I've had lunch with James Blake, Tom Odell, Sam Smith, Sam Fender. I just have lunch with them and say, "Listen, what you're doing is OK. If you ever need any advice, here's my email. If you ever need any help, then here I am."

DJ: Did Bono ask any advice? He's currently finishing his autobiography...

EJ: I don't think he needs any advice from me. We had the most wonderful summer with him. He's a great mimic and he was talking a lot about his early days and how he met his wife's family and how they all were in the same school. Hearing about those early days in Dublin was great, as you don't often hear Bono talking about that and it made me even more fond of him.

DJ: I gather you now have a swear box, to discourage you.

EJ: Oh, yes. I'm up to €520. Plenty of fucks and bloodies, but no c***s. **GQ**

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2016	Lovie Long Form Or Series Video People's Choice	2006	PPA Writer Of The Year
2015	DMA Men's Lifestyle Magazine Of The Year	2005	PPA Writer Of The Year
2015	FMJA Stylist Of The Year (GQ Style)	2005	Magazine Design Awards Best Cover
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2014	TCADP Media Award	2003	PPA Writer Of The Year
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2012	DMA Lifestyle Magazine Of The Year	1995	PPA Columnist Of The Year
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Story by **Teo van den Broeke**

Photograph by **David Lineton**

A sultry new neck-coater from Boss? Be still, our beating heart notes

G

erman uber-brand Boss' brand-new, ultra-grown-up fragrance – Boss Bottled Absolute – is here to edify your nostrils and it is as sultry as it is sensual. Created by master perfumer Annick Ménardo (responsible for such creations as Dior's Bois d'Argent and the original Boss Bottled), this new bathroom banger is a sophisticated eau de parfum spiked with bright notes of bergamot and plum. Elsewhere, undertones of olive, cedar and sandalwood add depth, while complex musk has an aphrodisiac effect. Our advice, therefore, is to apply liberally this party season and expect plenty of warranted attention... **GQ**

From left: Edge
wears jacket, £712.
Trousers, £140. Jean
wears jacket, £709.
trousers, £110. All by
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From left: Edge wears hoodie, £252. Trousers, £171. Jean wears jacket, £566. Trousers, £110. All by **Colmar**. colmar.it



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ROOF DOWN IN NOVEMBER? IT MUST BE THE BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GTC

With the latest in **MOBILE LUXURY**, this is our monthly guide for you **KINGS OF THE ROAD**. Be it GT, EV or SUV, GQ buckles into the **HOT SEATS** and takes a grand tour of motoring's **MOST DESIRABLE** drives

BENTLEY REDEFINES *the* GRAND TOURER

The Continental GTC defies categorisation

Story by **Dylan Jones**

For my sins I've driven a lot of Bentleys. And while there are few things that beat the sensation of steering a great, hulking racing-green luxury beast down the open road – often at unconscionably, sometimes frighteningly high speeds – occasionally you can start to feel as though you're driving the world's most expensive piece of luggage, almost as though you're in charge of a really large 3-D logo.

No, I'm not complaining, and the driving experience is sumptuous in the extreme, but when you're guiding one of the larger Bentleys through inappropriate terrain – the winding roads in the hills above Banyuls-sur-Mer in southern France, for instance – you imagine there could be a huge speech bubble hovering above the car that screams, *"I am driving a really big Bentley!"* But in French, obviously.

Now, I've often thought the logical endgame

for luxury accoutrements is to have an authorised brand tattoo – not one of the ironic ones, like a tiny Ralph Lauren polo player tattooed above your left nipple or "Tommy Hilfiger" inked onto your thigh (I've seen both, the first in Hyde Park in the Nineties and the second in Ibiza a few years later), but a proper one, perhaps done by special appointment in one of those Bond Street or Fifth Avenue palaces, where you would pay for a limited-edition tattoo on your wrist, say, or just above your ankle.

The logos would be beautifully drawn, in specially designed, bespoke colours, in order

The GT convertible makes you feel like you are driving a pochette rather than a suitcase



At a trifling 4.85 metres long, the Continental GTC is a tighter package than the rest of the Bentley stable





Top down in 20 seconds (0-60 in 3.7...)

for you to pledge your lifelong allegiance to the brand. And because part of the thrill of buying luxury goods is leaving the shop carrying a wallop great cardboard bag, you would be given a copy of the stencil to proudly display at home, above the mantelpiece maybe, or a downstairs loo, or maybe kept in an ostentatious plan chest.

But as Louis Vuitton doesn't yet do tattoos, you're going to have to buy a Bentley. And seeing that you perhaps want something a little more discreet than a Mulsanne, a Flying Spur or a Bentayga (all of which are more than five metres long), you'll probably want to opt for the relatively new Continental GT Convertible (a relative titch at 4.85 metres). It's smallish, incredibly powerful, sporty and makes you feel as though you're driving a pochette rather than a suitcase.

Personally speaking, it is also the best driving experience I have ever had in a Bentley. Why? Well, let me count the ways. Firstly, it is ridiculously fast, with whiplash acceleration. It goes from nought to 60 before you've properly decided to move at all. In fact, I have a

Need to know

Bentley Continental GTC

Engine
626bhp 6.0-litre twin-turbo W12

Performance
0-60mph, 3.7 secs;
top speed, 207mph

Price
£175,890

Contact
bentleymotors.com

sneaking suspicion the GTC I was driving started moving before I'd actually put my seatbelt on. I mean, it's *really* quick. Also, it has a beautiful, sexy interior, a roof that can be stowed or erected in less than 20 seconds (this really is a seriously cool feature) and a display screen that flips from analogue to digital with such grace you wish it would never stop. Bentley has always been big on details and, make no mistake, the new Continental GT Convertible is its most detailed beast yet.

It's a heavy car and yet it's so sporty it doesn't feel like it, which is fundamentally why it's such fun to drive. It costs £175,890 for the basic model, but if you can afford that then you're almost certainly going to want to spend another £50,000 on all the special features, including the £6,500 Naim stereo and the practically limitless customisation opportunities. Not only that, but instead of being designed by an imbecile, which most navigation systems are, the one here is incredibly simple to use, making it easy even for an imbecile such as me to master.

This Bentley gives you an imperial sense of luxurious isolation, one that's amplified when you're driving at night, when the cabin is decorated with a thin green neon tube, making the car feel like some kind of sci-fi cockpit. Good thing, by the way.

This is a grand tourer that makes a mockery of its class, as it's so fast you'll probably arrive at your destination before you've left. Want to lose your licence and look good while you're doing it? Buy this car. Sure, it whistles a bit at high speeds, but who would deny Bentley the opportunity to improve upon perfection?

What do Greta Thunberg and VOLVO have in common?

Yes, we know you know they're both Swedish. But the XC40 is part of the car marque's new environmentalist vision

Story by **Paul Henderson**

Professor Bert Bolin was a multi-award-winning Swedish meteorologist who spent much of his life as a pioneering scientific statesman and was instrumental in developing and promoting climate research. Bolin worked tirelessly on the subject during the Sixties and Seventies. Then in 1987 he contributed substantially to the 500-page Brundtland Report that served as a warning to the world of the rise in global temperatures and helped persuade the United Nations to create the Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change. You probably haven't heard of him.

You know Greta Thunberg, though. The 16-year-old Swedish activist has significantly raised worldwide awareness of the climate crisis, met with (and chastised) world leaders and appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine, which described her as a "next-generation leader". Thanks to Thunberg, millions of young people and adults from 150 countries have taken part in Global Climate Strikes. And she has achieved all that in the space of just over a year.

Inspired by their fellow Swedes, Gothenberg-based Volvo has committed to doing its bit. From next year, the carmaker's target is that no one should be killed or seriously injured in a new Volvo and intends to reduce the top speed of all its cars to 112mph. Volvo is also the first major premium car company to commit to having only hybrid or fully electric powertrains for all its vehicles and by 2025 plans to use recycled material to produce at least 25 per cent of its in-car plastics and for its global manufacturing operations to be carbon neutral. All of which

are fine sentiments, but they wouldn't mean much if Volvo did not have a track record of acting responsibly and making cars that people actually want to drive.

Fortunately, Volvo does. Like Bolin, Volvo also quietly spent decades working on what it believed in, such as developing safety systems including the first three-point seatbelt (1959), rear-facing child seats (1972), side-impact protection (1991) and a blind spot information system (2004) – all of which would become industry standard on most new cars. Like Thunberg, Volvo has challenged the public's perception and convinced people to take notice.

And the XC40 is the model that has taken the brand to the next level. Named European Car Of The Year in 2018, it is a compact SUV that manages to be both clever and the epitome of Scandi cool. For a start, it looks great. Not Ferrari great, of course, but practical, muscular and sleekly understated without being generic. Its two-tone styling works well (especially if you plump for the exterior styling kit), as do the 20in double-spoke wheels. It is as handsome as the daddy of off-road daddies, the



Need to know

Volvo XC40 T4 R-Design Pro

Engine
188bhp 2.0-litre turbo

Performance
0-62mph, 8.1 secs;
top speed, 130mph

Price
From £35,585

Contact
volvo.co.uk

Volvo is the first major car company to commit to having only hybrid or fully electric powertrains

A fully electric XC40 will launch next year



Range Rover Evoque. Inside, it is even better. It feels far bigger and more refined than any compact car should and the large Sensus infotainment screen that pretty much runs the car (Buttons? Switches? Don't be a knob) is intuitive and complemented by Apple CarPlay and a Harman Kardon surround-sound system.

Then there is all the stuff you can't see but wouldn't want to be without: pilot assist, city safety, run-off road protection, oncoming lane mitigation, cross-traffic alert (with brake support) and a 360-degree camera. What does all this stuff do? Keeps you safe, overrides your driving errors and makes parking an absolute doddle.

It isn't perfect, of course. The driving experience is reliable not radical and the 34mpg figure is optimistic to say the least. Most Volvo drivers care about this stuff – they will be delighted with the former (and they're right you don't need supercar handling on the way to the recycling centre), but less impressed with the latter. But don't worry: a fully electric XC40 will be here next year. When you go to buy one (and you really should), tell them Greta sent you...

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The "1999" hit-maker talks us through how to write pop gold, exclusively for *GQ Hype*.



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The actor breaks down his character in *The Crown*.



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Land Rover returns to its roots
The new Defender is the single most capable car on the market.



Naomie Harris relives Skyfall

The actress talks us through what it was like behind the scenes on *Bond*.

Porsche has gone electric*

*Isn't it time you did too?

Story by **Jason Barlow**



Elon Musk has built such a rabid cult of personality that Tesla's online acolytes will have your virtual arm off if you dare diss him or the brand. Tesla's great and all, but I refuse to drink the Kool-Aid. Especially now that the electric car I've been holding out for is finally here – the *Porsche* electric car. Now the game changes.

After nearly 70 years at the pointy end, these guys are to automotive engineering what The Beatles were to popular song. And the all-new, clean-sheet-of-paper Taycan aims to deliver everything Porsche stands for, just minus the beat of an old-school engine. This is a monumentally complete effort, no question. The Taycan uses a 90kWh battery and two permanent-magnet synchronous motors (PSM) to optimise efficiency and thermal management (PSMs have superior energy density compared to the asynchronous kind used by Tesla and others). So, while this lissom-looking four-door coupé weighs an unavoidably chunky 2.3 tonnes, its centre of gravity is the lowest, says Porsche, of any of the cars it makes. Now they've got my attention.

Equally, the Taycan's numerous electronic control systems push everything into new territory. Forget the fact that the Taycan Turbo S will warp from zero to 62mph in 2.8 seconds. Or that using the same power inverter-enabled over-boost function delivers the equivalent of 750bhp-plus and 774lb ft of torque – true hypercar numbers. No, it's other stuff that hits home: its throttle response is five times faster than on a regular car and its traction control is ten times quicker-acting than normal and so good that the car can transition from a wet to dry corner and back again without the slightest chassis interruption.

Looks-wise, the car drips with cool graphics and eye-catching detail while staying true to Porsche's expertly managed surface language and sense of proportion. It's low, long and stimulating. And to sit in: you can see the front wings cresting, the main instrument binnacle is slender, curved and houses a 16.8in screen, and the seats and switchgear are pure Porsche.

The Taycan has air suspension, adaptive damping, 48V anti-roll technology and there's a limited-slip rear differential. This is Porsche *in excelsis*. Hold on, there's no gear lever or flappy paddles, just an oblong switch by the steering wheel to engage drive or reverse. Porsches are sensitive and tactile devices, so how can this be? There's an initially

Need to know

Porsche Taycan Turbo S

Power
Two permanent-magnet synchronous motors (750bhp)

Performance
0-62mph, 2.8 secs; top speed, 162mph

Price
From £138,826

Contact
porsche.com

All Porsche, no combustion: the Taycan Turbo S

disorienting calm as you pull away, a sense of what's absent rather than what's there.

At a cruise, the car switches between front and rear motors, whichever is more efficient, and its cooling apertures close to improve aerodynamics. There's a perceptible thrum as this engages and it gathers momentum. And, boy, does it gather momentum; in "Sport Plus" mode, its acceleration is a neck-snapping, stomach-flipping, interstellar sensation. The brakes are superb. It's a Porsche, y'see, and it handles like one. Just an electric one.

But there are differences here, too. It has a lighter wiring loom, more compact cabling and because it's the first car to use an 800V electrical system, it imbibes power at a remarkable rate. Charging at 350kW gives you 62 miles of range in five minutes or from almost empty to 80 per cent in 20 minutes using Ionity stations, of which there are, sadly, just two currently in the UK. Using a standard 11kW charger, Porsche claims it takes six to eight hours to replenish from five to 80 per cent.

We didn't see anything like the claimed 261-mile range for the Turbo S; we guess that's what happens when you go chasing the horizon with 750bhp. The Taycan also costs Porsche money – £115,858 in Turbo form, £138,826 in Turbo S guise. The revolution will be electrified, no doubt about it, and this peerless Porsche product is leading the charge. But we're not there yet. **GQ**





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Straddling two continents,
Istanbul buzzes with a
collision of cultures



Go *BIG* in Istanbul

The Turkish metropolis promises to tick all your city-break boxes

Story by **Sophie Clark**

The meeting point of East and West, Istanbul offers an ancient and diverse cultural history. A central hub connecting Asia and Europe, the city is a vibrant metropolis home to 15 million people, welcoming travellers from around the globe to explore its dynamic nightlife and enchanted palaces.

It's impossible to visit Istanbul without being drawn into its rich culture and historic wonders; its cinematic history and unique geographical placement make it a city of legend told through its mosques, bazaars, museums and architecture. A must-visit is the Aya Sofya. Dating back to the ninth century, it's one of the greatest remaining structures of Byzantine architecture, with its dome an iconic symbol of the city. Inside, you'll be amazed by a mosaic of the Virgin Mary, the glowing brilliance of low-hanging lights in the main hall and the spectacular view from the upper gallery.

Nearby, and of similarly grand scale as the Aya Sofya, is the Sultan Ahmed Mosque. Also known as The Blue Mosque due to its 20,000 blue Iznik tiles that adorn its interior, this landmark has fascinated historians and architects

for centuries (as well as today's Instagram crowd). Walking around the sites you'll be thoroughly warmed up for a shopping session.

If you haven't explored the Grand Bazaar, have you even visited Istanbul? Scaling 30,700 square metres, more than 60 streets and alleys and 4,000 shops, this vast site is the largest covered market in the world. Expect everything from handmade shoes and Ottoman antiques to jewellery and carpets. With technicolour displays of hanging lanterns, never-ending walls of fabrics and linens and shelves filled with ceramics, the Grand Bazaar – which is best explored organically, wandering



It's impossible to visit Istanbul without being drawn into its culture and historic wonders

to wherever your senses are drawn – is a maze of Turkish curiosities where locals and tourists shop alike. If you're looking for a more relaxed approach to shopping, however, consider antique hunting in the Cukurcuma neighbourhood of Beyoglu. Famous for its streets lined with stores selling vintage clothing and original antiques, a day's shopping here offers much-welcomed pit stops in cosy cafés and contemporary art galleries. Whichever way you wander you'll be sure to work up an appetite.

With cuisine as diverse as its heritage and as vibrant as its neighbourhoods, Istanbul takes dining seriously and so should you. Feast on freshly made lahmacun, indulge in a meze of Turkish favourites such as fava, kopoglu and muhammara or sample Adana or Urfa kebabs – the options are endless. Whichever dish tempts your taste buds, be sure to follow it with a raki or a glass of locally produced wine.

A city of culinary delights, energetic locals, bustling bazaars and architectural wonders, a trip to Istanbul is truly city-break goals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EXPLORING ISTANBUL, VISIT HOMETURKEY.COM/EN



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+ No more Mr Straight Guy p.114 Air dogs and Englishmen p.117 Business cards begone p.118

He's Sporty & Rich. Are you?

The hypebeast brand that
rebadged Camelot

House Rules' 'spirit pres'
JFK aboard family yacht
the Honey Fitz, 1960

THE GO

HOUSE RULES

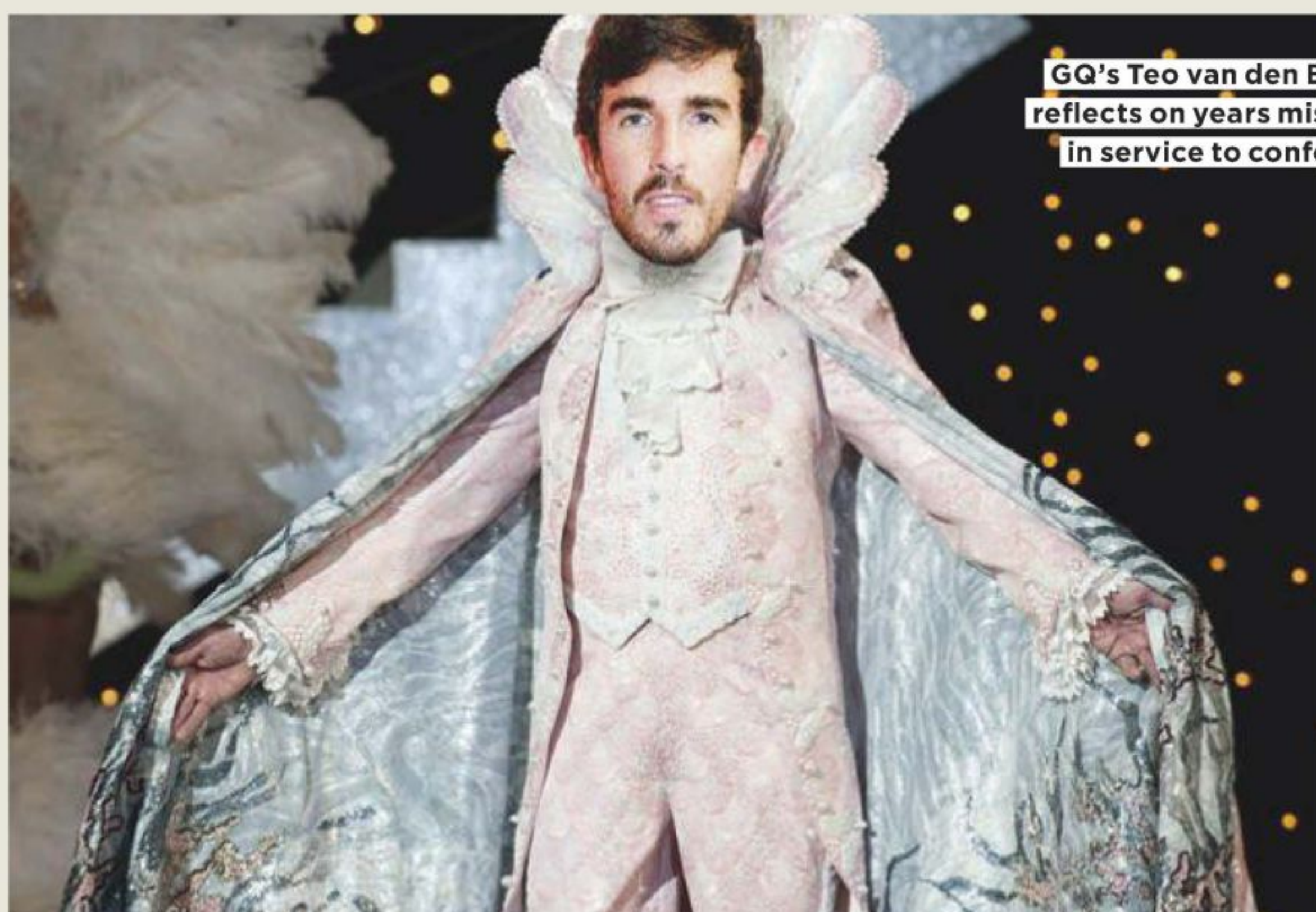
This is for the style lodestars. The agitators. The peacocks. This section believes in combining an aesthete's eye with an inner rebelliousness. From killer opinion to white-hot trends, these pages are not about following tradition, but beating your own path. You're welcome...

Edited by **Jonathan Heaf**

'DOWN-GAYING'

(And why I'm done with it)

Story by **Teo van den Broeke**



GQ's Teo van den Broeke reflects on years misspent in service to conformity

Thing is, I've spent a great deal of my life assimilating the idea of what a man should be, gay or otherwise. It's a pernicious disease, a falsified notion of eternally stoic masculinity, and it's one that's claiming increasing numbers of young male lives each year. It's no secret that suicide is the biggest killer of men under 45 in the UK, but, according to the 2013 Gay And Bisexual Men's Health Survey, three per cent of gay men attempted suicide that year, compared to 0.4 per cent of all men.

I also spent much of my childhood wearing the statement "You're all right... for 'one of them'" (a statement made at me, whether I asked for it or not, by a few male relatives and many male friends) as a badge of honour, a thumbs-up from the straight community into which I was so desperate to fit.

The more recent comment – the one made in that London trattoria only months ago – brought all those feelings of shame and poisoned pride back to the fore, feelings that, like internal Demogorgons, were desperate to drag my confident 32-year-old self back into the murky teenage Upside Down.

But it also made me think, "Fuck it. I'm not going to 'down-gay' my wardrobe for anyone any more." Where once those feelings of internalised homophobia and repression resulted in a wardrobe populated by slim-cut indigo jeans, navy crewnecks and unadorned white T-shirts

'You're all right... for one of them' used to be a badge of honour

At the end of August, I went out for dinner with a large group of friends. It was an excellent dinner at a swanky Italian restaurant, one of those Chianti-soaked, focaccia-stuffed, olive-up-the-nostril evenings that make you feel like you've been sunning it up in the Tuscan hills all day, even though you've actually been incarcerated in the concrete environs of Camberwell since, well, April.

Some of the group were close pals from university, people with whom I learned to vomit up pints of snakebite and lose my self-awareness; others were more vague in acquaintance and a few were total strangers.

At one point during the meal – when enough red wine had been imbibed to conjure that conspiratorial, clubby feeling only stomach-coating tannins can – a boyfriend of one of my female friends, a generally jovial sort (whom I actually like very much), asked me, in front of everyone, after much coughing, spluttering and throat clearing, whether or not I would wear the outfit I was wearing if I wasn't gay.

Let's get one thing straight: I wasn't wearing leather trousers, nor was I sporting crotchless pants or a cropped Dolly Parton-emblazoned T-shirt (though now I think about it, I wish I had been). Likewise, I wasn't wearing any of the other garms traditionally – and entirely homophobically – associated with "the gays".

No. Rather I was wearing an oatmeal linen shirt by Brunello Cucinelli (with a nice rust-hued chalk stripe sewn into it, thank you very much), a pair of ivory twill jeans by American Vintage (into which said shirt was tucked), a brown woven leather belt by RM Williams, a pair of (slightly OTT, I grant you) Louis Vuitton monogrammed sandals and, well, a killer tan.

To diffuse the tension in the moment I asked my friend's boyfriend whether he was posing the question because he wished he could dress more like me (he didn't really respond), though I knew in reality that by making any kind of style statement that wasn't a navy-blue T-shirt, chinos and flip-flops, I had become the entirely all too flamboyant homo at the dinner table.

(all garments I continue to love, in truth), since turning 30 I've found myself eager to take more risks. I've been wearing a pair of flared leopard-print Marni jeans to death of late – and don't get me started on my oversized Balenciaga shirt, which makes me look like the lanky love child of Liza Minnelli and Maria Callas.

I had been planning on wearing my new wraparound Prada belt with my aforementioned chinos and shirt to dinner that night, but I didn't for fear of insulting anyone's straighter sensibilities. Little did I know. Surely in this age of *RuPaul's Drag Race* and *Queer Eye*, of make-up for men and loving yourself so you can love somebody else (can I get an amen?), but also the self-same age in which hate crimes against LGBTQ+ people surged by 144 per cent between 2014 and 2018, it's everyone's duty – straight or gay, trans or lesbian, binary or nonbinary – to celebrate each other's quirks and foibles, our different strokes as different folks. Even if some of us have slightly questionable taste in jeans.

The Insta-feed that became a hype brand*

SPORTY & RICH

***It's not elitist. It's chicest**

Story by **Jonathan Heaf**

I was at lunch with a good pal of mine – he had the shrimp burger; I had the baked cauli in tahini; we shared a cold bottle of hard-to-source Badoit sparkling water (finer, softer bubbles) – and he mentioned a new LA-based “culturepreneur” named Emily Oberg. “She’s got a great, cool take,” my friend, a man who is always throwing out aesthetic tips or recommending talent to watch, explained with a face full of shellfish. “She’s super ‘right now’.”

Oberg’s lifestyle brand, Sporty & Rich (great name, huh?), is exactly what you’re looking for in 2019, if what you’re looking for is an athleisure label that riffs off all those Slim Aarons-style Insta pics you spend your lunchtime wading through. You know what I mean: a blond Andre Agassi in pink cycling shorts or Princess Diana in an American football letterman...

What is Sporty & Rich exactly? Is it an Instagram feed or a clothing brand, or just a certain way of

looking at the style world, albeit retrospectively? “It’s a lifestyle brand and mood board,” Oberg tells *House Rules*. “It’s a collection of thoughtfully designed products that emphasise longevity over momentary relevance. The ethos is, ‘Be nice, drink water, be good to the planet, take care of yourself and live a life of pleasure.’”

Still don’t get it? Sporty & Rich is chic, exclusive, desirable. Like playing tennis on a clay court in Saint Barts with Karlie Kloss while wearing a pristine pair of Superga – but with no socks. No? Look, remember when that really cool, nonchalant girl in your French class used to go around wearing her mother’s old violet beret, humming Boris Vian songs and thumbing through an old copy of *Lui* in an intimidating sort of a way? Well, Sporty & Rich is a bit like that: cool to the point of being cliquey and about as desirable as a jumper from The Row – just minus the paycheque-shredding price tags.



Hat, £40. Crewneck, £115. Sweatpants, £130. All by **Sporty & Rich**. sportyandrich.com



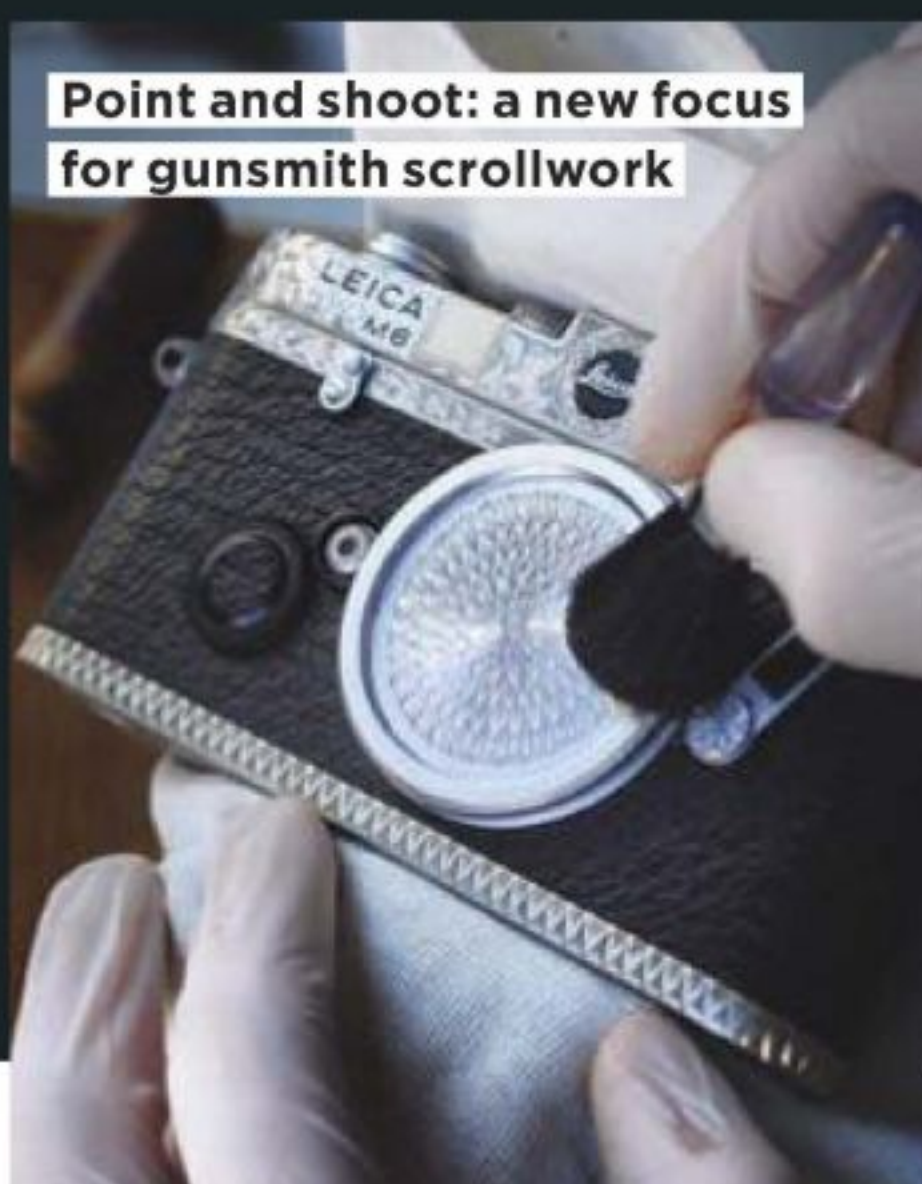
GQ’s fitness issue, May 1975: a #mood for Emily Oberg’s Sporty & Rich (we assume)

Having grown up in Canada obsessing over streetwear brands such as Stüssy and XLarge, at 15 Oberg found herself restless in Hawaii, spending her time absorbing style sites such as Hypebeast and Highsnobiety. After landing her “dream job” in New York working for *Complex* magazine – despite no experience – after three years she moved back to Canada

to become creative lead of Kith’s women’s team. Around this time Sporty & Rich was born, giving the young, hungry Oberg a platform through which to express her toned and honed luxury aesthetic.

Although many of the references her brand bounces off are of the super-elite at play, Oberg, now in LA, is keen to stress her label’s inclusivity: “I started the brand in 2014, which is right when the luxury world started to catch on to streetwear. Now it’s ubiquitous. It’s the combination of high and low: think of a vintage [Land Rover] Defender driven by a fifty-something guy wearing an old pair of Levi’s. You know the look.”

No? C’mon. Well, I guess those who get it get it. And those who don’t... sportyandrich.com



Point and shoot: a new focus for gunsmith scrollwork

There’s carving a niche... And then there’s niche carving

Freshly furnished with A-levels in art and English, Johnny Dowell was on his way to a fashion degree when an uncle encouraged him to enrol as an apprentice at James Purdey & Sons, the storied Mayfair gunsmith. Fifteen years later and tiring of “scrollwork and symmetry”, he struck out on his own and quickly found his metier: bringing traditional handcrafting to luxury goods. In short order, he worked with Bamford Watch Department restyling Rolex and Patek Philippe models, collaborated with headphone manufacturer Master & Dynamic and more recently undertook a private commission detailing a Leica M6 camera (left) owned by GQ contributing photographer Gavin Bond. Now, Dowell is behind one of the coolest looking watches of the year. Limited to just eight examples, the Oktopus Volcano (right) builds on two previous collabs with Linde Werdelin and involves a process wherein Dowell has created “cups” in the near-impregnable titanium Grade 5 case that are filled with gold to create a remarkable, lava-like effect. The process took 100 hours and, understandably, Dowell says, “I doubt I’ll ever engrave a harder material in my life.” **Bill Prince** £18,000. lindewerdelin.com





1,001 MANSSENTIALS

✦ (Because who doesn't need, well, everything?)

With Nick Foulkes **This month:** Okapi horn pendants

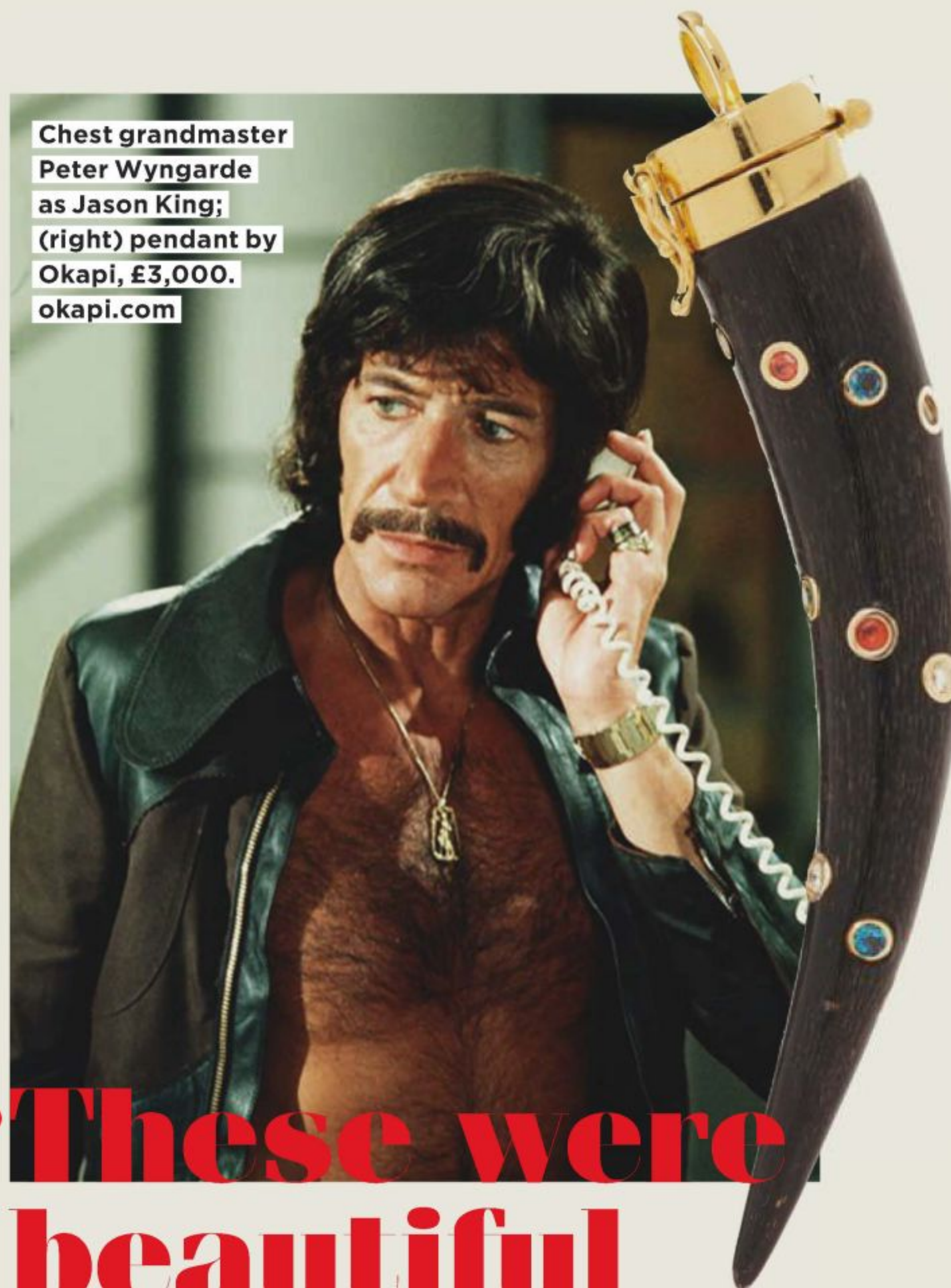
Not counting Marrakech, which in any case I find often resembles a far-flung suburb of Paris, I have never visited Africa. Shocking isn't it? As I scroll through the photos in my iPhone, I find no shots of giraffes nibbling tree-tops, no photographs of six-star, tented eco-luxury game reserves, no pictures of sunset (or is it sunrise?) over the Serengeti. To be honest, without my friends at Wikipedia I couldn't really tell you exactly or, for that matter, even roughly where the Serengeti is.

I do not really see myself as a Wilbur Smith or H Rider Haggard protagonist: all that trekking and tracking and wilderness and bushcraft is too macho for me. I am simply not up to Africa... or so I have thought for the majority of my life, but now I am not so sure.

What has had me question my deeply rooted reluctance to embrace Africa? It is a rhetorical question that hardly needs answering: luxury goods. Luxury goods are where the worlds of craft and art meet, where you see the applied arts in action. Luxury goods are the fruits of a deeply rooted and highly developed aesthetic culture. And as well as the cradle of humanity Africa might also be the carrycot of the luxury goods business: in my new book, *Taming Time*, the first "timepiece" I write about is the Ishango bone, a 25,000-year-old baboon fibula, found in what is now the Democratic Republic Of Congo, that has been interpreted by some scholars as having been used as an early calendar.

I am sure it was the case all those millennia ago that one was not properly dressed for

Chest grandmaster
Peter Wyngarde
as Jason King;
(right) pendant by
Okapi, £3,000.
okapi.com



'These were beautiful things being thrown away'

a night out at the prehistoric answer to 5 Hertford Street without an upcycled mammoth's tusk somewhere about one's person. However, tastes have moved on since the Palaeolithic era and these days the acme of sub-Saharan style is the Springbok horn pendant from South African luxury brand Okapi.

The okapi is an animal that cannot quite decide whether it is a giraffe or a zebra, which is probably why it is described as the "African unicorn". This whimsical taxonomic designation

appealed to Hanneli Rupert, who used it as the name of her brand when she started it about ten years ago. Hanneli is a scion of the Rupert luxury goods dynasty – Cartier, Van Cleef & Arpels, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Dunhill, Montblanc, *inter alia* – so she has grown up around nice things, but rather than creating another European-flavoured brand, Okapi has the *goût de terroir* of her native Africa.

It started with handbags, made from locally tanned game hides, characterised by a little scimitar-shaped horn closure.

I asked her about the horns and I was surprised to learn that they were waste products. "I got the idea because I was looking at beautiful natural things that were being thrown away and recovered them," she said. I told her I thought they would make superb pendants: they reminded me of the coral talismans worn by Italian playboys. Happily, Hanneli concurred and this autumn she launches her first collection of high jewellery and seldom has upcycling looked so good. It's eco-bling par excellence, mounted with gold fittings and studded with anything from turquoise to diamonds (but without guilt, if indeed you find yourself assailed by guilt).

Safari-chic has never been so sustainable. Hanneli ensures her brand manufactures everything locally with selected ethical partners. This stuff looks as good glimpsed through a slightly too unbuttoned Charvet shirt at Loulou's as it does around a campfire in the veldt.

As far as I am concerned, there is no male thorax that is not enhanced by a chain with a few baubles dangling from it. I would like to think that my male fashion hero *GQ Style* Editor Luke Day is aligned with my view.

In this instance I practise what I preach and garnish my rather unappealing middle-aged sternum with gewgaws – and they have brought me luck of a sort. People ask me to tell them about the pendants, rather than commiserate with me about my problem pectorals. Needless to say, I have already bespoken a particularly extravagant Springbok horn pendant so as to further distract people from the inevitable continued decline of my physique.

AIR DOGS ARE NAFF!

Story by
Jonathan Heaf

Also: stop treating your pooch like a baby

My dog died a few months ago. There, feel better now? Good. Well, it's the most devastating thing to happen to me since I lost a £2,000 Neil Barrett shearling coat in a club ten years ago. (I *really* loved that coat.) Of course, those who think they know me will insist that my flippancy over my beloved rescue lurcher dying hides a cold but shattered heart. And they might be right.

Still, hear this: dogs are dogs, not people, people. I was upset, yes. But I'm not in mourning. He was a beast. A savage. A dog. I know this may seem obvious (and heartless) to some of you, but at times some folks seem to forget this, not least those who seem to want to treat their hounds less like the snarling balls of poop and fur they are and more like little human beings.

Fashion designers are the arch culprits. I once drove a French designer 150 miles to a posh dog farm outside Durham to buy a shih tzu the precise shade of off-white. (His name for the poor beast? Crème Brûlée. Yep.) The dog was whisked off to Paris, where he was forced to wear cashmere booties, have his hair coiffured into cute bunches, and had the indignity of sporting Hermès silk scarfs around his crotch to arrest any... accidents. Mercifully, the pooch popped his pedicured paws after one plate of poached foie gras too many.

The infantilisation of these forcibly domesticated animals is rampant and should stop. Sweaters



The dog wore silk scarfs on his crotch to arrest any accidents

Man's best friend
(and his dogs), 1984

for dogs, spas for dogs, perfume for dogs – all part of the “petfluencer” commercial universe. What happened to taking your dog for a muddy walk on the heath, cracking a fresh duck egg over his pelt (great for their sheen, supposedly) and then letting his matted fur dry in front of an open log fire?

The truth is many of the most

desirable pure pedigree “designer” cross-breeds, such as the labradoodle, have been overbred. Wally Conron, the man often credited for “creating” the hyper but happy mop-haired breed, commented recently: “I opened a Pandora’s Box and released a Frankenstein[s] monster.” Seems the designer dog days are well and truly over.

Jonathan Heaf



‘Ciao, ragazzi!’

Nothing says ‘too smooth’ like an over-the-shoulder blazer

You know the type: maybe he's a European fashion photographer, mid-forties, and likes to arrive at parties late and half-cut on codeine and breadsticks? He's still good-looking enough to catch many an eye and he can just about fit into his old Saint Laurent double-breasted tux. Trouble is, he's just not growing old with any dignity, nor any grace or élan. His spurs – even after the messy divorce and the near-crippling settlement – are far beyond being hung up and he sashays around like Alain Delon in his menacing pomp. The giveaway is that suit jacket worn over the shoulders: draped like Superman's cape but hung with a touch more dark energy. Look, he's not a pervert, he's just, well, a bit flash. A bit too smooth. A bit too slick. He looks the part, he just doesn't realise the beautiful, energised, 20-year-old woman in the Celine dress at the bar has no desire to hear his anecdote about the time he crashed Cardi B's after-show and threw up all over her rider after one too many Casamigos. The takeaway here? Beware men who can't put their arms through their suit jackets and say “Pronto” when answering the phone, despite being about as Italian as Jeremy Clarkson. JH



Oliver Cheshire

Edmond Kamara

Business cards are for HAS-BEENS, not GONNA-BES

So why are you carrying them around with you?

Story by Dylan Jones



As we now live in a digital world, you might have felt that the business card was surplus to requirements, might have thought they had gone the way of the fountain pen, the briefcase and the tie, business accessories that no longer seem necessary. Indeed, unless I'm going to China – where, if you don't have a business card, small children will literally laugh at you in the street – I almost never carry them.

Sure, I've got a pantechicon of the damn things at work, probably enough to build a small wall (maybe not enough to build one between Texas and Mexico, but certainly enough to build one between Rutland and Lincolnshire), but I rarely use them nowadays.

If I meet someone who I genuinely want to see again (which is almost never, if I'm honest) I simply punch my email into their phone and move on. Lots of other people do the same,

so why do some people still feel the need to use business cards?

I used to think it was because they were favoured by people with relatively no status who brandished them to impress upon people who actually had real status, semaphoring the fact that they were gainfully employed. The problem is that unless you live and work in China, say, or Japan, people's business cards tend to sit in your wallet until they disintegrate.

But still they come, drawn from inside pockets like silver pistols, thrust into your hand with the enthusiasm of the travelling salesman or the wandering gypsy. I

have a small stack of them in my office, teetering like some miniature Tower Of Pisa, ready to cover my floor with a variety of vice presidents and digital consultants (real meaning: "I own a phone"). Business cards have become big at the sharp end of the service industry too. I was in India a few years ago, staying at a selection of Oberoi hotels, and not only was everyone very attentive – you were not allowed to open any door, carry any bag or indeed fold your own newspaper – but they also offered their business card as a matter of course, as though not to would be the most dreadful social faux pas. I now have a rather considerable collection of them, so if I ever need to contact the

assistant food and beverage manager of the Oberoi in Agra, I won't need to go via the front desk.

So now that I have been reacquainted with the importance of the business card,

I have one final complaint. Why are so many of them black? I think some people perhaps started commissioning black cards because they made them seem more interesting or edgy, whereas in reality they don't make any sense as you can't write on them. Which means that when you're given a black business card, there is nowhere to write the words, in very large letters: *Never take this man's calls*.

So let *House Rules* offer a dictum: never commission a black business card, and under no circumstances offer one to anyone at *GQ*. If you do, we retain the right to refuse it. *Capiche?*

I have a stack of them in my office, a mini Tower Of Pisa

BAROMETER

UP

Kendall Roy, style icon

Every fintech bro's outerwear wet dream.

'Being busy isn't working'

If Virgil Abloh can take a sabbatical, so can you. Drop the ball occasionally. Talk to your family. It'll do you some good.

The Butterfly

Finally the NYC sceney bar scene is back. Go before everyone else.

Snitching

According to star witness/rapper Tekashi69, everyone else is to blame bar himself.

Brad envy

Yeah. We know. The man's in his prime. Again. (Asshole.)

Bob's Plymouth shawl sweater

From the *Desire* album. Part of Bob Dylan's official merch.

'Five decaf Espresso Mockinis, please'

Get the fuck out of my restaurant.

Rollneck and blazer combo

You. Look. Like. Everyone. Else. We've called time on this timeless style. Keep up, *Details* (p.69).

Smart ovens

Internal cameras tell you when your salmon fillet is cooked to perfection. Then it sends you a text. Seriously.

Manxiety supplements

A gummy bear to cure baldness and erectile dysfunction? Go for a run. Eat your greens.

Apple Watch Series 5

"A display that never sleeps." Oh, right. Like all watches. Since forever.

DOWN

CRUSH

the
(weather)*And your style
nemesis to boot

SYSTEM*

Maybe it's more a state of mind than a particular age, but there's a moment in every man's life when he decides, consciously or unconsciously, to pivot away from superficiality and head towards pure practicality. I know. Bonkers. You can tell whether or not someone has been through this style manopause because if you look down at their feet, their footwear betrays their diminishing sartorial powers. You know the sort of thing: guys who wear old Asics running shoes with too-baggy navy suits to the office on a Monday morning. Or men who still think a "going-out shoe" is something tan, highly polished and with a pointy, square toe. Birkenstocks, if worn with shorts at the weekend, can also be a sign of a man having given up on life. Sure, they are comfortable, but so is a coffin.

Although my fashion palette is perhaps getting narrower, I'm yet to throw in the towel completely on wearing silly fashion garms, especially when it comes to footwear. OK, it's not like I'll arrive to a client pitch wearing a pair of Balenciaga x Crocs or show up to an interview wearing a pair of skis, but still I like to think my boots show an understated commitment to style over substance. I have two pairs for the winter months: the first, a pair of narrow black Burberry Chelsea boots that I must have had resoled half a dozen times. So far so sturdy, right? Wrong. What they have in rock'n'roll aesthetic they lack in hardiness: rain water frequently leaks between the leather and rubber, not least if a puddle is encountered. The second on heavy rotation is a pair of Cuban-heeled boots from a Swedish brand called Everyday Hero: the three-inch heel adds to one's ego, sure, but is deadly when worn over January's ice patches.

Boots by **Kurt Geiger**, £169. kurtgeiger.com

I need a winter boot that looks good but works harder. I want tred, not trad. Still, I can't bear anything like a duck boot: those hideous, hybrid monstrosities that look like a Timberland boot had sex with a pair of wellies. Thankfully, high street behemoth Kurt Geiger has come to the rescue with a Chelsea boot that is one-part Romper Stomper shit-kicker, two-parts rakish indie heel. The brand's Cade Chelsea boot gives you the best of both worlds – winter-proof, without making a man look like he no longer bothers. Slip them on, stomp into March with élan, and put one's fashion manopause off until next year.

Jacob Rees-Mogg



Your gym's conspicuous
'big swingers' are coming
for your business...

THE POWER LUNCH IS DEAD

**Beware the
locker room
power rant**

Story by **Jonathan Heaf**



Remember that scene from *Wall Street*? The one in which Michael Douglas is schooling a naive-looking Charlie Sheen on what it takes to become a ball-busting, stock-shredding master of the universe.

"Most of these Harvard MBA types don't add up to dog shit," says a grinning Douglas as arch-power broker Gordon Gekko, combing his wet-look hair in the posh locker room of his members-only gym, his braces taut with old-school machismo. "Give me guys that are poor, smart and hungry. And no feelings. You win a few, you lose a few but you keep on fighting. And if you need a friend, get a dog. It's trench warfare out there, pal..."

Well, I for one thought all that ranty, masculine, balls-out power chat had been jettisoned into the garbage bin of history. With employees now all too aware, quite rightly, of how they should be treated and spoken to in the workplace, those times when one's boss could break your proverbials in a boardroom meeting are well and truly nixed. Or so I thought, as last week, while towelling off in the new hyper-luxe Equinox gym in London's St James's – a marble-clad Batcave crossed with Claridge's dining room – I couldn't help but overhear such a loud, swaggering exchange between two post-woke alpha males.

"I've got ten families, all with one hundred mil in the pot, all shitting the bed wondering what the hell is happening in Westminster," yelled Power Bro No1 while standing nude, legs akimbo, his manhood swaying in the perfumed breeze. "German construction, mate. Retail. Unfallible," shot back Power Bro No2, buttoning up his bespoke Pink shirt with initials stitched onto the sleeve.

It was close to parody, and yet there was something refreshing about the directness of all their bluster and big-money chat – it was unapologetically bolshie. It was a two-way rant; they certainly weren't listening to one another. It was all done, it seemed, for the benefit of their audience – myself and a couple of others getting changed quietly. Maybe for some guys, the gym locker room as a male safe space for "big talk" still exists... Though, best keep in mind how "locker room chat" worked out for others, not least the president of the United States.

Warning: wolves attack when their prey are most vulnerable, when their guard, and their pants, are down. "You want another chance?" spat Gekko all those years ago to Bud Fox. "Then stop sending me information and you start getting me some. Get dressed and I'll show you my charts."

Three ways to wear... **A silly (but warming) winter hat**

Story by **Jonathan Heaf**

Illustrations by **Kasiq Jungwoo**



1.

Chapeau, Mr Beckham

We got worried a few years back when Jason Statham and Guy Ritchie started dressing like Cotswolds groundsmen. Trust David Beckham to flip a trend, a man who can make a baker boy cap look modern. If you've got the jawline, make like Thomas Shelby...



2.

Pull the wool over your eyes

Beanies have flip-flopped in and out of fashion more times than statement T-shirts. Go bold: forget dull colours and pick something that indicates your outlier status.



3.

Too 'Smooth Criminal'

How many times have you tried on a fedora and looked in the mirror, only to surmise that, nope, you couldn't pull it off? Screw it. Lift the brim way back so the thing sits on your crown and flash a big Goldblum grin at all the naysayers.

GQ House Rules

thread) will set you back less than £250, and you'll be looking at a similar price for a classic Melton wool peacoat in adaptable navy blue. If you're thinking about spending a little bit more, some good mid-range options can be found at Hackett (the brand's navy-blue trench coats are second to few) and Barbour, where one of the British label's classic waxed jackets – which make great trans-seasonal options – come in at well under £500. At the very top end of your budget I would keep it homegrown and head to Burberry, where natty peacoats and homely duffels start at around £900. Elsewhere, Boss cuts an excellent camel coat for less than you'd spend on a Michelin-starred dinner for two (with wine), while Italian brands Barena, Massimo Alba and Aspesi all excel at ultra-tactile textured greatcoats – most of which come in at around the £700 mark. If you're thinking about joining the oversized trend, achingly cool Swedish label Acne Studios is arguably your best bet. And, failing all that, just wear your coat from last year: sustainability, etc.

I've got an anvil-shaped head, which makes it very difficult to wear hats. But I also have very little hair, which means I have no option but to reach for some insulating headwear when the weather gets cold. What would you recommend I go for?

Anon, Mill Hill

Dear Anon, I would suggest opting for something a little more architectural, which creates the illusion of an elegant head shape but also keeps you warm. London-based hatter Lock & Co does an excellent line in cashmere engineer caps, which are constructed by stitching a top panel to a head wrap, helping to create a less lumpen, more angular shape. When it's really cold, however, you could do worse than opt for one of Prada's oversized nylon trapper hats, which will draw attention away from that head of yours before you can say, "Fashion!"

Where can I find the best Chelsea boots?

Alan, Shepton Mallet

Here goes, Alan. For chunky black, go to Church's or Prada. For classic brown (waxed or otherwise), head to Crockett & Jones. For Vibram-soled styles, go to Grenson. For slinky, it's all about Saint Laurent. And for something mad? You'd better head to Gucci. **GQ**

SEND YOUR MENSWEAR-RELATED STYLE QUESTIONS TO STYLESHRINK@CONDENAST.CO.UK



Style Shrink

by Teo van den Broeke

I'm about to make my annual winter coat purchase, but I haven't got the foggiest what I should be buying or where to start looking. I don't really want to spend more than £1,000 (at the absolute upper limit) and I want something that will look cool. But I also want something that will last me much longer than six months. Do you have any advice?

Richard, Aldeburgh

Hi, Richard. I, too, am starting to think about my annual coat purchase with similar budgetary trepidation – though,

in reality, I'll probably have bought several parkas, shearlings and great coats before the month is out, so virulent is my outerwear addiction. In my opinion, Richard, the high street has never been better at producing surprisingly high-quality coats. My first stop, if I were you, would be Arket, the newest offshoot from the H&M group, which has a satisfyingly wholesome bent. Here, a classic grey windowpane-check car coat cut from 100 per cent wool (a cornerstone of any masculine wardrobe worth its



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*You glide silently
past wildebeest,
elephants and
impala drinking
at the water's edge*

ON SAFARI IN SOUTH LUANGWA
NATIONAL PARK, ZAMBIA

GQ TRAVEL

Where to stay, how to get there and **WHO TO KNOW**, this is the keycard that opens **ALL THE RIGHT DOORS**. Whether weekends or weeks, get away from home (and email) with the GQ guide to the **WHOLE WIDE WORLD** Edited by **Bill Prince**

Photograph Will Burrard-Lucas



ZAMBIA

A Chinzombo
Lodge villa with
views across the
Luangwa River

Alone in the wild

Safari doesn't have to mean jostling for position amid a scrum of 4x4s. GQ sought out the hides in southern Africa where the animals are not outnumbered

Story by **Emily Wright**

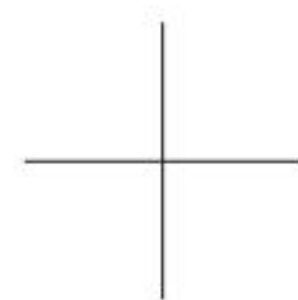


"Those hippos look very close," was one of the most frequently uttered phrases of our honeymoon. You can forget sweet nothings when your canoe has run aground on a sandbank in the middle of the Zambezi river with a pod of grunting, territorial hippos on one side and an eight-foot crocodile on the other.

But for a trip with a partner that ticks the once-in-a-lifetime box tempered by a healthy dose of reality, an adventure-packed safari is just the right pitch. Being surrounded by wildlife and wilderness instils a sense of togetherness and an intimate element is wrapped up in the partial seclusion only the right location can guarantee.

As an alternative to better-known African safari destinations, Zambia is a relatively quiet choice. Sightings take a little longer and can be more infrequent, but there is less chance of being one of a fleet of rival safari vehicles jostling for position. When you are the only 4x4 tracking a lone leopard as she stalks a herd of impala under a starlit sky, the privacy is more than worth the wait for the sighting itself.

From the sprawling savannah of South Luangwa National Park to the lush riverbanks of the Zambezi, travelling around Zambia – we hopped in and out of the capital of Lusaka on a selection of increasingly tiny aircraft – before heading to the coast for five days in Mozambique via Johannesburg is a tried-and-tested formula, but far from the cookie-cutter honeymoon experience.



GQ took the 17-day The Ultimate African Honeymoon with The Luxury Safari Company. £10,500 per person, including full-board accommodation, internal flights and transfers. theluxurysafari.com. Return flights to Johannesburg from London Heathrow with Virgin Atlantic start from £557. virginatlantic.com

FIRST STOP

South Luangwa National Park

Sweeping along the banks of the Luangwa River, Chinzombo Lodge is a magical place. A luxury camp accessible only by boat, it emanates an almost mystical natural beauty. Designed by architects Silvio Rech and Lesley Carstens, the six open-fronted grass and canvas villas all have panoramic views over the water. Neutral shades of taupe, cream and dark timber are punctuated only by the blue flash of each private plunge pool. Otherwise, everything from the freestanding bath to the shampoo bottles and from the bed linen to the lamps blends into the earthen colour scheme. The in-room crystal decanter of whiskey is a particularly nice touch. Each villa is connected by a guarded path (animals wander freely through the camp) back to Chinzombo's communal space, where guests



It's the perfect spot for 5am coffee and scrambled eggs cooked over the fire pit

congregate in the under-canvas restaurant and bar or on the decked platform jutting out over the river. Built in and around ancient shade trees, the central structure is woven into the natural fabric of the bush. It's the perfect spot for 5am coffee and scrambled eggs cooked over the fire pit, lazy post-drive lunches and evening meals in the glow of hurricane lanterns. The staff and guards are exceptional, the food excellent and the guides respectful of the animals yet able to get you close enough for great sightings day and night. Game drives – all in open Toyota Land Cruisers – are some of the best in Zambia. But for a true Attenborough experience, be sure to do an up-close-and-personal walking safari. You haven't seen anything until you've witnessed an army of several thousand soldier ants invade a termite mound.

TIMEANDTIDEAFRICA.COM



Inside and out, an earthen palette colours a stay at Chinzombo Lodge



Elephants use Sausage Tree Camp's riverfront location as a thoroughfare from the bush to the Zambezi

SECOND STOP

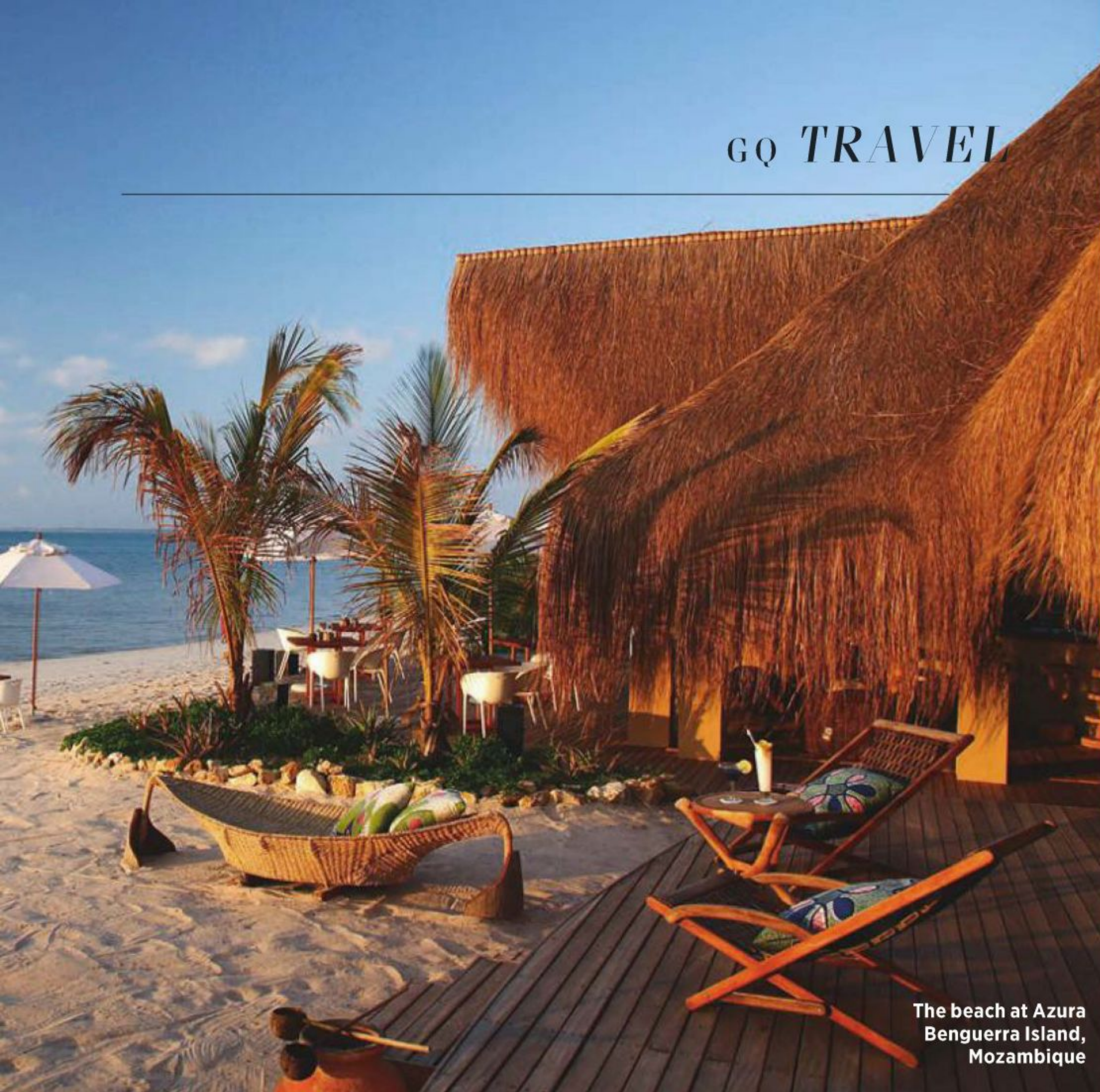
Lower Zambezi and a trip to 'hippo city'

A mere three internal flights, a Land Rover transfer and a sunset boat ride from South Luangwa, Sausage Tree Camp in Lower Zambezi is named after the surrounding indigenous trees, where leopards sleep by day and feed at night. Set on the Zambezi river, it has views over the vast expanse of water to the tree line of Zimbabwe in the distance. The villas here – with private pools and leather armchairs facing out over the river with binoculars for in-room game spotting – feel more like hotel suites than the grass structures of Chinzombo. And the sturdiness is reassuring given their proximity to the water. Elephants use the camp as a through-route from bush to river and hippos feed at night just inches away. Speaking of which, if we thought we'd seen a lot of hippos in the previous camp, nothing could have prepared us for the number of them here – the place



we opted to do a canoe-based river cruise. The hair-raising three-hour meander was an ordeal at the time and a highlight in retrospect. A guest and a guide per canoe, it's a trip of two halves. On one hand, it's the most tranquil way to see the wildlife as you glide silently past wildebeest, impala and elephants drinking at the water's edge. But then there are the hippos. Paddling past nervy, snorting pods – at times less than six feet away – is not for the faint-hearted. One spot dubbed "hippo city", where more than 30 of the animals congregate, was particularly nail-biting. Tensions rose further when an eight-foot crocodile swam directly under our canoe. But when it comes to true safari experiences, heart-stopping though they were, these are the ones you want.

SAUSAGETREECAMP.COM



The beach at Azura
Benguerra Island,
Mozambique

THIRD STOP

Benguerra beach life in Mozambique

From the khaki tones of the bush to the rich blue of aptly named Azura Benguerra Island, off Mozambique's coast. A helicopter transfer sets the tone for this part of the trip, where beach villas with outdoor showers, private pools and bamboo paths to the sea set the tone for a stint of laid-back luxury. Lazy lie-ins signal the end of 5am safari wake-up calls and each villa boasts a private beach cabana where sundowners are delivered daily at 5pm. Later, tealight candle paths along the beach guide guests from their villas to restaurant and bar and back again. Relaxation is the name of the game here, but if a total wind-down isn't your thing, there is plenty to do. The safari element moves from land to sea, where snorkellers and scuba divers alike can spy moray eels, rays, barracuda and – at the right time of year – migrating whale sharks. Back on dry land, a trip to the spa – hidden among the trees lining the beach – adds another layer of serenity.

AZURA-RETREATS.COM

Top and tail your trip

A luxurious layover to bookend the main event is the ideal way to acclimatise before and after your African adventure



You might be tempted to grit your teeth and push on to your first safari location, but a stopover on your way to the wilderness will likely be your last night within solid walls for a few days – so make the most of it. Latitude 15 Degrees in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, is a luxury layover just 30 minutes' drive from the airport. A stylish boutique hotel packed with art, it is the perfect place to rest before the real adventure begins. Fast-forward to the end of the safari and for many travellers heading from bush to beach, a route through Johannesburg is part and parcel of the trip. After six nights under (luxurious) canvas, the five-star opulence of the Saxon Hotel is an unrivalled return to comfort. Part of

the residences where Nelson Mandela stayed after his release from prison, the property has a fascinating backstory, told through a series of black-and-white photos lining the hallways. If you're just here for a night there is an exceptional fine-dining restaurant on site, but if you're tired from travelling, with another early start looming, the rooms are arguably too good to leave. Plus, there's nothing quite like putting on a robe, opening a bottle of local red and ordering a room-service burger. You never know, it might be an another unexpected highlight.

LATITUDE 15 DEGREES, LEOPARDS LANE, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA. 15.THELATITUDEHOTELS.COM. THE SAXON, 36 SAXON ROAD, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA. SAXON.CO.ZA



Poolside at Latitude 15
Degrees in Lusaka, Zambia

CHECK-IN

A room with a clue

Fancy a more challenging hotel stay? Book your spot on this prize-winning package

Calling all treasure-hunters: Rosewood London is launching a one-of-a-kind challenge-based package. The brainchild of board game creator Clarendon, the three-hour "Room Hunt" sees five teams of two guests compete for the ultimate upgrade by solving puzzles that span the hotel. Think of it as a high-end – and far less taxing – *Crystal Maze*. To start, each team is given a locked box, a hotel map and their first clue card. The aim of the game is to get back to "base" and open the box first, using a combination revealed through each

task. We say task, but really most are decadent treats. One sees you decorate a pie (which, once golden, will await you in your room). Another involves making a Martini in Scarfes Bar. The first couple to unbolt the box gets bumped up to one of the hotel's signature suites, including a butler and a host of other prizes. **Kathleen Johnston GQ**

ON SELECTED WEEKENDS FROM 23 NOVEMBER. £755 FOR TWO. ROSEWOOD LONDON, 252 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON WC1. ROSEWOODHOTELS.COM

SOHO-HO-HO

How to nail Christmas in LONDON'S SOHO

Home to some of Britain's most exciting independent shops, Soho is the perfect place to pick up unique and original Christmas presents this year

Story by **Kevin EG Perry** Photograph by **Polly Hanrahan**

If you're on the hunt for individual and creative gifts this year, we strongly recommend heading straight to London's Soho. It's the go-to destination for fashionable Londoners thanks to its thriving community of independent brands, cult streetwear shops and record stores. Nearby you'll also find bespoke tailors and textile merchants of Berwick Street as well as traditional London pubs such as The Blue Posts and John Snow nestled next to a whole host of bars and restaurants offering exciting Christmas experiences this season.

Take Chinese restaurant The Duck And Rice on Berwick Street, for example, which is hosting mulled wine masterclasses, Drag Queen Christmas Carols and festive sharing menus. Meanwhile at New York-inspired Dirty Bones you'll find holiday specials including the Vixen cocktail (a Christmas-spiced remix of the classic Cosmopolitan) and a menu of festive favourites with a Dirty Bones twist (look out for the sweet and sour



cranberries).

On Rupert Street, Hovarda is a perfect after-dinner party spot, while Heritage has a special Christmas menu including truffle fondue and turkey medallions, which you can barbecue yourself on the table-top grills.

With all that food and drink on offer you'll be well-fuelled as you complete your Christmas shopping, and with the fantastic range of fashion, lifestyle and grooming brands such as Footpatrol, Oliver Spencer, END and God Can't Destroy Streetwear, you'll be spoilt for choice.

Once finished with the shopping, wrap up your evening with Soho's great nightlife. Located in the beating heart of the West End, the area's arts and culture scene is forever expanding. Try the new Boulevard Theatre opening this winter and finish the evening with a nightcap at one of Soho's many bars including Cahoots and Basement Sate.

FOR MORE GIFT IDEAS AND FURTHER SHOPPING INFORMATION, HEAD TO THISISSOHO.CO.UK AND FOLLOW @THISISSOHO ON INSTAGRAM, TWITTER AND FACEBOOK.

SOHO GIFT GUIDE It's that time of year, so spread some joy with these gift ideas...

1



2



3



4



5



6



1. Morgan sunglasses by **Ace & Tate**, £98. aceandtate.com 2. Socks by **Universal Works**, £14. universalworks.co.uk
3. Clean 90 sneakers by **Axel Arigato**, £160. axelarigato.com 4. Blenheim Crew Stanley jumper by **Oliver Spencer**, £219. oliverspencer.co.uk
5. Karlo scarf by **Wood Wood**, £60. woodwood.com 6. Alva Metal Hook rucksack by **Sandqvist**, £189. sandqvist.com

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‘The people of Manchester are going to love it. Stars don’t matter’

Gary Neville

Gary Neville plays in a new opening by Tom Kerridge at his Stock Exchange Hotel in Manchester – p.130

+ **Black Axe Mangal:** Recipes to turbocharge a takeaway p.130 **Soutine:** North London dining à la 2ème arrondissement p.132 **Adare Manor:** Ireland’s all-seasons stay p.133

The Opening

The Bull & Bear, Manchester

On a quest to elevate the North West's culinary scene, United hero Gary Neville plays in Tom Kerridge to manage his most considered offering yet



"I have made three instinctive decisions in the past four years that have all failed," Gary Neville admits. "I agreed to become Valencia manager, I opened The Rabbit In The Moon and then there was the Manchester Mahiki..." He trails off, exasperated at himself. Football fans won't need reminding how badly things went for Neville in Spain, with only three league wins. The restaurant he created with chef Michael O'Hare was supposed to deliver the city's first Michelin star, but Mancunian diners didn't share their ambition. And as for Mahiki... "I don't even like nightclubs!" he exclaims.

Neville can laugh about these costly ventures now, partly because he understands why they happened ("I went with a gut feeling, not with facts"), but principally because he has another project he is far more confident in and excited about. Having acquired the old Grade II-listed Northern Stock Exchange building in 2013, Neville has spent the intervening years developing the site into a 40-room hotel. He has also made a major signing in the recruitment of chef/restaurateur Tom Kerridge.

With a proven track record for delivering the goods, Kerridge is a major player, with three

Michelin stars to his name at The Hand And Flowers and The Coach, plus hotel experience acquired during his successful first year at London's Corinthia. Which is where he first met Neville. "Gary was the first customer through the door," he recalls. "He asked me to come and have a look at the Stock Exchange. I had no intention of doing another restaurant, absolutely none... and then I saw the space and it was just perfect. I just had to say yes. Plus, it was Gary Neville."

A Manchester United fan since childhood, Kerridge was so inspired by the team's – and Neville's – heroics in winning the Treble in 1999 that he took time out from his cooking duties to travel up to Deansgate and watch the official parade.

The Bull & Bear opens on 15 November and will, according to Neville and Kerridge, be a perfect fit for Manchester. "The menu Tom has created is accessible, will appeal to people and the prices won't scare them off," says Neville. "For me, it will be ingredient-led and doing what we do best, which is the simple things cooked to the highest standard," Kerridge adds. "Things like venison chilli with red wine and the most amazing chocolate tart. I can't wait to get started."

And is a Michelin star a target? They both look at each other. "I just want people to like it," says Neville. "We have thought about every aspect: the design, menu, pricing. It's going to be hard work, we know that, but I know the people of Manchester are going to love it. Stars don't matter." PH

● Stock Exchange Hotel, 4 Norfolk Street, Manchester M2 1DW. 01614 703901. stockexchangehotel.co.uk

Accessible? Check. Elevated? Check. The Tom Kerridge chicken Kiev at The Bull & Bear



The Book

Black Axe Mangal

by Lee Tiernan

From caviar to takeaways, experimental, rebellious barbecue is on the menu



Looking (and sounding) like the dorm room of a sexy metalhead, the energy of North London restaurant Black Axe Mangal should be impossible to replicate on the page. Yet, in this new cookbook, it's managed it. "I've never been attracted to the idea of writing a 'This is what we do in the restaurant but you'll never be able to achieve it at home' cookbook, as much as I've never been attracted to writing something generic," says founder and chef Lee Tiernan in the opening. "I want us to have fun with this book together." While the grilling section will be hard to explore without a garden, most recipes are doable without. Indeed, some dishes – such as caviar with sour cream and chive Pringles or French toast made out of leftover Domino's – are dangerously achievable.

Classics such as the crispy rabbit or the foie gras doughnut are both complex beasts to master. The lamb offal flatbread is much easier. A gull's egg, caviar and sea urchin dish is so impossible to make even its creator is reticent to try: it exists more as memoir than menu. But memories like these are why this book sings. Other dishes, such as the hispi cabbage in fermented shrimp butter, will undoubtedly become crucial parts of one's repertoire. This is gnarly, audacious stuff that mixes odes to KFC with advice for prepping hares. You won't find a more exciting (and excitable) cookbook. David Levesley

● *Black Axe Mangal* by Lee Tiernan (Phaidon, £24.95) is out now.



The Bar

Kwānt at Momo, London

Speak (and drink) easy, deep down inside Mayfair's Moroccan hideaway



Heddon Street favourite Momo has had a reboot and with it comes a wonderful Aladdin's cave-style speakeasy unlike

anywhere else in London. Gloriously ornate, bathed in low, golden light and hidden behind a heavy unmarked wooden door at the bottom of steep stone stairs just left of the main restaurant, Kwānt feels like the illicit high society bolthole you might discover underneath a Marrakech souk, should a well-meaning hawker accidentally let the password slip. Imagine a place perfect for furtive affairs, under-the-radar business deals and inconspicuous celebrity meet-ups: the atmosphere is civilised, the space ultra chic. The intricately woven bamboo ceiling is tempered by leather Chesterfield sofas and slick black surfaces, with a hand-painted plant mural flanked by regal potted palms.

The menu, too, is just as glamorous. Cocktails come courtesy of award-winning bartender Erik Lorincz (of The Savoy's American Bar fame), who has partnered with Momo's owner, Mourad Mazouz (also responsible for Sketch, hence the next-level design), on the subterranean spot. Flawlessly made Negronis and Gimlets are served alongside innovations such as the Green Pony (Copperhead Gin with Fallen Pony, lemon, spirulina and tonic). For the big spenders, there's also a tantalising hoard of vintage cocktails. A Dry Martini made from Eighties vermouth will set you back £145, the special Sazerac £475. When it comes to bar snacks, the no-brainers are, of course, the bejewelled falafels and Momo's famed houmous. But also worth an order are the crisp crab-stuffed bourek. This elevated take on a Middle Eastern classic would make for the perfect canapé, which is really rather fortuitous because GQ loves the idea of renting out the bar for a private party. Hold a birthday here and any man's status atop his social circle would surely be secured. Kathleen Johnston

● 25 Heddon Street, London W1. 020 7434 4040. momo.london

The Roundup

+ The snack pack: cocktail bars with next-level food

Oriole

East Poultry Avenue, London EC1. 020 3457 8099. oriolebar.com



The setup: Once just a cellar under Smithfield Market, this sumptuous speakeasy presents live music and a long list of exotic cocktails brimming with theatre.

Eat this: Zippy, pan-Latin bar snacks include shrimp tostada with smoked chipotle, avocado and corn (£7) and sea bass ceviche (£8).

Drink that: The Bon Echo – a warming mix of rye, Cognac, Juneberry vermouth, Ontario-leaf aperitif and white cedar, presented in a hip flask – would be a showstopper even without the snow globe vessel (£14).

Tayer + Elementary

152 Old Street, London EC1. tayer-elementary.com



The setup: Is this the hottest launch of the year? Cocktail superstars Alex Kratena and Monica Berg's new bar is in two parts: Tayer (experimental) and Elementary (casual).

Eat this: Ana Gonçalves and Zijun Meng, AKA Tātá Eatery – the chef duo behind *that* katsu sando – are in the kitchen. This cult crustless sandwich is filled with Iberian pork, raspberry jam and XO shallot sauce (£14.50).

Drink that: The Palo Santo Gimlet (£9) takes its cues from the Amazonian rainforest.

Little Mercies

20 Broadway Parade, London N8. 020 8292 1832. littlemercies.co.uk



The setup: Co-owned by the Venning brothers (Bar Three; Three Sheets) and Alan Sherwood (Peg + Patriot; Scout), this tiny Crouch End bar has a fine pedigree.

Eat this: Imaginative small plates include the humble crumpet topped with shredded beef and blue cheese rarebit (£6.50).

Drink that: The Pornstar (passion fruit vodka, passion fruit cordial, wine and verjus) has come out of retirement: pre-batched, carbonated and poured from a wine bottle (£9).

Jennifer Bradley

The Bottles

The Gin Club



Don't believe anyone who tells you that the gin bubble has burst or the juniper-infused crown is slipping. New brands launch every day, ranging from ancient recipes to candyfloss unicorn gin. Avoid the latter by joining a membership service such as The Gin Club, which delivers an exclusive bottle to its subscribers every month. TGC's Filip Nilsson says there's no shortage of new products: "We work with everyone from tiny independent distilleries up to established names." Earlier this year, Nilsson and co included McQueen And The Violet Fog, a stunning Brazilian small-batch bottle that uses 21 botanicals, six of which are not used in any other gin. Beloved by Wiz Khalifa, it's a full but balanced mouthful and makes a stunning Vesper, a couple of which should definitely leave you feeling young, wild and free. Natasha Britton

● £34.99 a month. theginclub.com





Pan-seared
sea bass with
sauce vierge

The Restaurant

Soutine, London

Bringing a touch of Gallic joie de vivre to St John's Wood, Corbin and King's latest ensures we'll always have Paris



Stepping out of the taxi, ten feet from the entrance of Soutine – Chris Corbin and Jeremy King's new French-flavoured *grande bouffe* in St John's Wood – you notice the heady ambience immediately, not least as it seems to be oozing out all over the streets like a freshly baked Camembert. Beaming bros in weathered red chinos are braying convivially, well-dressed hedgies gesticulate wildly surrounded by stacks of fresh oysters – bottle of Vignes d'Oc rosé in one hand, lit cigarette in the other – while smart, savvy women in Saint Laurent trouser suits (Prada heels kicked off, natch) demolish crème brûlées the size of Citroën DS hubcaps. There's a distinct air of *je ne sais quoi*. Welcome to Paris, England.

Inside, beyond the reverberating terrace that skirts the joint, it's no less bustling or bourgeois. Ever the creators of a distinct "scene", the famous restaurateurs have conjured their precise magic here once more: it not only looks like an authentic Parisian bistro (wooden veneer panelling throughout; dainty circular tables for two with marble

inlay; gleaming mirrors on virtually every wall; lace curtains; fast moving, no-nonsense waiters in full black tie), it also tastes like one. Less Café Rouge, more Café De Flore. How do we know? Well, *GQ* brought along its secret weapon: a bona fide, fully certified, rabble-rousing French woman.

The femme fatale's verdict? Well, the best starters included the endive and goats' curd salad – sharp, zesty and with more crunch than Macron's immigration policy – the radishes au beurre and a whole globe artichoke (although our French spy told us it should really be served with a pinch of rock salt and a sharp vinaigrette rather than béarnaise). Memorable mains were the fillet de boeuf au poivre (for me) and snails à la bourguignonne, a bubbling plate of meat, minced shallot, French butter and fresh parsley. With EU doom still in the air, this corner of France on a quaint West London street might be the next best thing to catching the Eurostar to central Paris. Brexit shmexit. **Jonathan Heaf**

● 60 St John's Wood High Street, London NW8.
020 3926 8448. soutine.co.uk

The Pub

The Marksman, London

Pitch-perfect cooking, from rabbit pies to pimped-up peas, in a proper East End spot



If there's a hostelry that flirts with the platonic ideal of what a modern public house should be, it's likely The Marksman on London's Hackney Road. Four years on from being purchased, renovated and relaunched by Tom Harris and Jon Rotheram, it consistently ticks every box the discerning pub-goer could desire.

Many of the regulars who made it a classic East London local in the Nineties and noughties still frequent the handsome dark-wooded ground-floor bar, imbuing it with a bit of real life to counterbalance the trendiness. The drinks selection is spot on, drawing from some of the best British craft brewers and a wine list that seamlessly blends the newfangled and natural with the noble.

Yet the main draw will always be the food. Gallons of ink and Instagram bandwidth have been expended covering the brown butter tart and the beef and barley bun with horseradish cream (the latter of which inspired its own single-item food stall), but honestly the pies are what keep us coming back. They change with the seasons and the current option, wrought from rabbit and ceps, is everything you could want from an autumn dish, as earthy as a walk in the woods.

Simple little things are perfectly executed, from the award-winning roast to smaller dishes such as peas, goats' curd and lovage to exceptional fried potatoes with caper mayonnaise. And that's what makes The Marksman an institution. Every detail is painstakingly considered. All of the decisions add up. The result is a damn-near perfect pub. Nick Savage

● 254 Hackney Road, London E2.
020 7739 7393. marksmanpublichouse.com

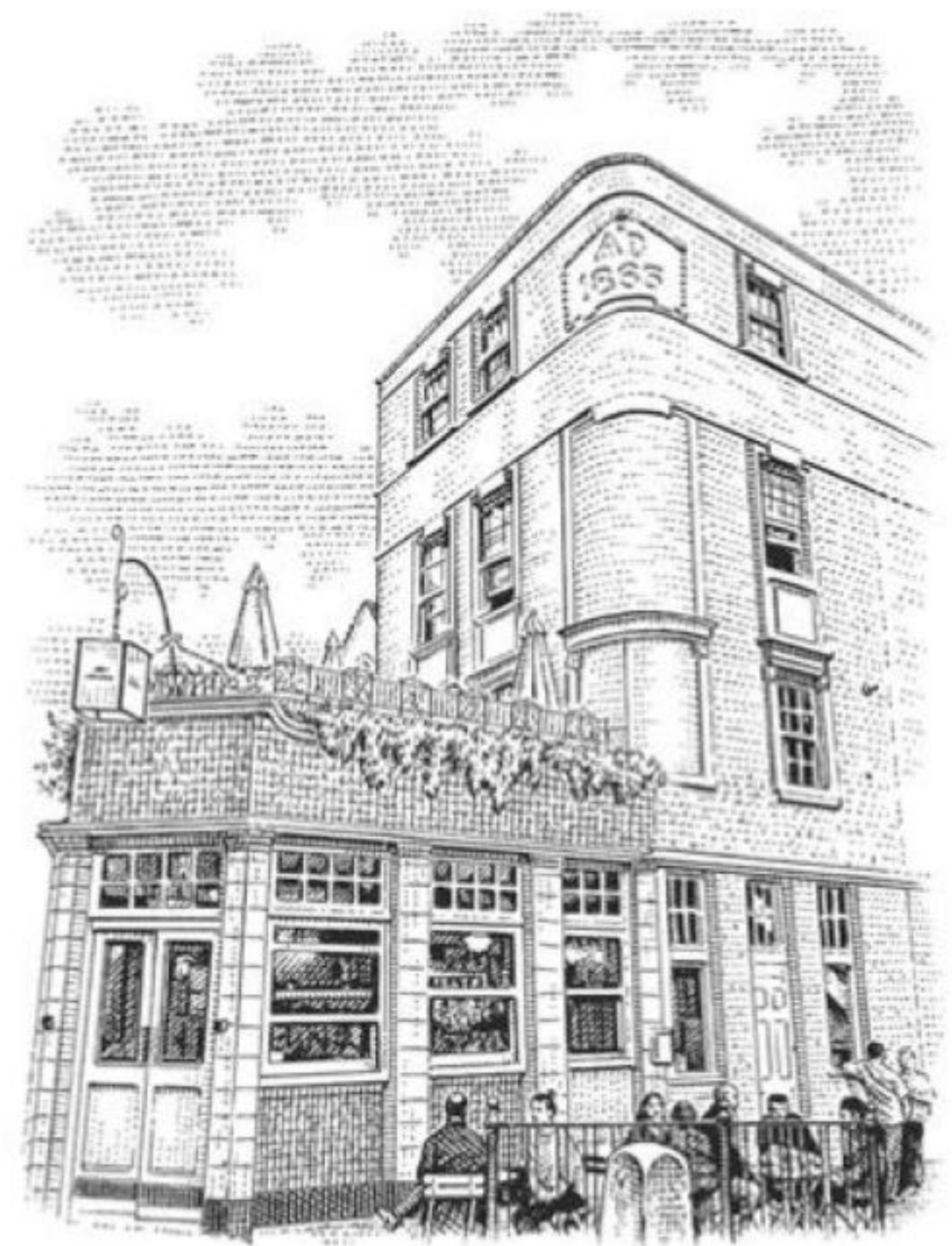


Illustration David Hopkins

With 365 windows and 52 chimneys, Adare Manor is worth your patronage all year round



The Hotel

Adare Manor, Ireland

Make room in your calendar for County Limerick's neo-gothic reopening



As houses constructed to celebrate love go, Adare Manor takes some beating (The Taj Mahal, maybe). Built in County Limerick during the mid-19th century by the 2nd Earl Of Dunraven for his wife, Lady Caroline Wyndham, this neo-gothic castle recently reopened after a two-year restoration and upgrade. It is now truly epic.

Adare Manor has everything you would expect of a hotel owned by tycoon JP McManus – picturesque, opulent and with a golf course set to host the 2026 Ryder Cup – but it also has an X factor thanks to the marriage of its storied past with a striking modernity.

Its quirks include the original “calendar design”, with 365 leaded windows, 52 chimneys, seven pillars and four towers to mark the year, weeks, days and seasons. There are gargoyles and carvings everywhere and strange staircases that resemble an Escher drawing. Mix all that with a spa from which you can swim looking up at the battlements, attentive staff and a restaurant with serious ambition and you can't fail.

At the Michelin-starred Oak Room, head chef Mike Tweedie produces dishes that stun without pretence. An alumnus of Michael Caines' Gidleigh Park, Tweedie expertly balances the evolving seven-course Market Menu. The turbot with lobster, capers and brown butter melts in the mouth and the salt-aged lamb with tapenade and goats' cheese leaves you wanting more – delivered by the Jaffa Cake dessert, a mature take on a teatime favourite.

With a subterranean cocktail bar, the Carriage House bistro and the monumental central Gallery, it always feels like there is another room to stumble into. It's part luxury, part fantasy, all good. **George Chesterton**



● Rooms from £602 a night. Adare, County Limerick, Ireland. +353 61 605 200. adaremanor.com

Small Bites

+ Where we've been eating this month...



The Betterment

Jason Atherton's return to Grosvenor Square is a brilliant brasserie that will annoy at least one of his neighbours.

Standout dish

Raw Orkney scallop and pear.

44 Grosvenor Square, London W1. 020 7596 3200. thebettermentmayfair.com



XR

The casual half of Carlo Scotto's restaurant double bill (Xier is upstairs). Expect British ingredients, Italian flavours and a nod to Japan.

Standout dish

Enoki mushroom truffle arancini

13-14 Thayer Street, London W1. 020 7486 3222. xierlondon.com



Bancone

The simple concept – fresh ingredients, open kitchen, marble counters – belies how extraordinary these pasta dishes are. Return frequently.

Standout dish

Bucatini cacio et pepe GQ

39 William IV Street, London WC2. 020 7240 8786. bancone.co.uk

SPIRIT *of* ADVENTURE

For nearly 300 years Rémy Martin has been dedicated to producing the finest cognac. This is how they make the liquid magic happen...



Two-Michelin-star chef
Claude Bosi

“When it comes to our cognac, it all starts with the terroir,” says Florian Hériard Dubreuil. And he should know. A fourth-generation member of the family that has overseen the House Of Rémy Martin since 1925, Florian Hériard Dubreuil is also an ambassador for the brand with a passion for the history, heritage and, of course, the horticulture of this most fascinating of regions.

Situated in south-west France, for lovers of this most sophisticated of spirits Cognac is a place of pilgrimage and the Historical House of Rémy Martin is their

Gracelands. Designed to take visitors – including, on this occasion, *GQ* and two-Michelin-star chef Claude Bosi (*above*) – on a near 300-year journey from grape to glass, Florian Hériard Dubreuil (*right*) is a guide with fascinating insights into the origins of cognac and an understanding of Rémy’s unique distillation and production process.

Starting as a family business back in 1724, all Rémy Martin cognacs are made using ugni blanc grapes that are grown on vines



that are at least five years old and are able to burrow through layers of porous earth and limestone to the rich soil beneath. Thanks to the warm, humid climate of the region – “Some people call the area the French Tuscany,” says Hériard Dubreuil with a wry smile – the grapes from Grande Champagne and Petite Champagne crus produce the aromatic, high acidic wine required. It is then distilled on the lees twice in copper stills, with the resulting eaux-de-vie (water of life) spirit then aged for at least two years in French oak casks until it can be called cognac and receive the Rémy Martin stamp of approval.

“What defines Rémy is its emblem – the

centaur,” says Hériard Dubreuil, of the half-man, half-horse motif that has graced the label since 1870. “It is a brand with its feet rooted on the ground and looking at the stars. We’re one of the few major houses to have been founded by a winegrower and we are very proud of our roots.”

While two years is the minimum ageing (earning the “VS” title for some cognac makers), Rémy doesn’t even start there. For Rémy, it is only after four years that it classes its cognac as VSOP, and at least ten years before it meets the XO standard. A blend of up to 400 eaux de vie, XO is a Fine Champagne that delivers a remarkably smooth, rich and mellow serve that is considered by some as the ultimate interpretation of the spirit.

To get a true feel for the cognac region and



and the Rémy Martin method, however, it is essential to visit Juillac-le-Coq to see the grapes on the vine and to visit its vast cellars where the spirit is aged. The current cellar master Baptiste Loiseau is the man who decides when the grapes are ready for harvest and how best to uphold the Rémy values with the various cognac blends to create the perfect balance of aroma and flavour.

"The cellar master is the master of the whole house," intones Hériard Dubreuil. "But it's him and his hand-chosen team that is responsible for everything. Their taste, their timing, their talent and their team spirit are what defines Rémy Martin. And what is fascinating is that, given the amount of time the cognac is allowed to develop in the casks, often the cellar master won't even get to taste the final fruits of his labour."

The challenge for Rémy Martin in the future, however, is the growing concern over global warming and the challenge of improving sustainability. With a commitment to eco-friendly wine-making methods, membership of the Ecophyto network (which reduces the use of pesticides and land pollution) and the Rémy Martin Reforestation Initiative (which guarantees the sourcing of Limousin oak used in the barrel-making process from neighbouring, sustainably managed forests), Rémy Martin is working hard to support and make environmental concerns a priority.

"Since 2012, Rémy's domaines have carried an AHVE (High Environmental Value Farming) certification," says Hériard Dubreuil. "We are proud to have been one of the first in France to receive it and we are encouraging other members of the Alliance Fine Champagne cooperative to follow our lead. We are proud of our past, but we also have a responsibility to future generations."

FOR MORE, VISIT REMYMARTIN.COM

The Recipe

Cep mushroom and aged parmesan risotto

Inspired by the Cognac region and the Rémy Martin XO experience, two-Michelin-star chef Claude Bosi has created a dish that unites both the ingredients and the spirit of the area...

"This cep mushroom risotto recipe is inspired by the authenticity of the Rémy Martin cognac-making process," says Claude Bosi from his legendary kitchen, Bibendum. "For almost 300 years, Rémy Martin has kept tradition alive by only using the finest ingredients.

That thought stayed with me when it came to creating a classic risotto with a minimal number of ingredients.

"The cep mushroom is the key ingredient and represents the earthy environment and the importance terroir plays in the making of Rémy Martin XO," he continues. "I also used 36-month-old parmesan for its salty crystallised texture that complements and amplifies the mushroom flavour, but also draws out some wonderfully deep umami notes of the cognac. These are a wonderfully simple ingredients that are fantastic on their own, but even better when paired with complex flavours of the XO."

● Claude Bosi at Bibendum, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 6RD.



Ingredients

20g butter	1 lemon, juice only
1 onion, roughly chopped	20g aged parmesan, finely grated
1 garlic clove, finely chopped	50g mascarpone
200ml white wine	8 fresh Parsley leaves, chopped
300g Italian risotto rice	8 fresh tarragon leaves, chopped
600ml of dried cep mushroom stock	3 small fresh ceps, shaved
150g dried cep mushroom, soaked for 2 hours	Olive oil, to garnish
	Sea salt flakes

Method

1. Heat half the butter in a large saucepan and sweat the onion and garlic until transparent. Pour in the wine, reduce the heat and cook for a few minutes. Add the risotto rice and cep mushrooms stock and bring back to the boil. Cook for 7 minutes over a high heat. Drain the rice, reserving the liquor in a saucepan.
2. Heat the remaining butter in a frying pan and sauté the cep mushrooms. Lightly season with salt and lemon juice to taste.
3. Gently heat up the saucepan of liquor, cooking until it is reduced by half. Add in the cep mushrooms and stir in the rice. Cook, stirring constantly, until the rice is tender. Stir in the parmesan, mascarpone and season with salt and lemon juice to taste. Mix in the parsley and tarragon just before serving.
4. Spoon into bowls and garnish with the ceps and olive oil. Season to taste and serve immediately

With a new cover interview on GQ.co.uk every Monday at 7am, *GQ Hype* is your weekly rolling feast of fashion, video, politics, sport, entertainment, food, travel, grooming and wellbeing. Get *Hype* and get hyped.

Couch SURFING

It's never too early for Oscar buzz. We pick the films and stars to watch for 2020.



20 Questions WITH...

Artists such as Enoc Perez (above) talk through what's on their playlist, their last three Google searches and more.



The Nine-to-Five WORKOUT

From runners to rugby players and founder of training phenomenon F45 Rob Deutsch (above), find out how the elite eat, drink and sleep.

THE BEST STREETWEAR DROPS OF THE WEEK

Feed your inner hypebeast with our roundup of the launches you should have on your radar.



Cover DROP

Every Monday at 7am see our latest cover star on GQ.co.uk and social @britishgq.

Michelin Star

Le Clarence is pure ROMANCE for FOOD and DRINK lovers

The Parisian restaurant hosts an unrivalled culinary experience

Story by Anna Conrad



Le Clarence, situated on 31 Avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Paris, may look like a regal hotel, but its devotion is purely to the best in food and drink. Its elegant townhouse entrance leads you firstly to the La Cave du Château, the wine boutique, where under the family company of Domaine Clarence Dillon it produces stand-out regional labels. Guided by CEO Prince Robert of Luxembourg, Domaine Clarence Dillon is one of the world's most prestigious wine companies, owning Bordeaux First Growth, Château Haut-Brion, as well as Château La Mission Haut-Brion, Château Quintus and Clarendelle.

Walk across from La Cave du Château and go up the grand staircase, where you'll find their extraordinary restaurant, Le Clarence. The decor is the epitome of elegance: tapestries, period paintings, chandeliers, parquet floors and antique furniture fill the intimate space, where the attention to detail is exquisite.

The two Michelin-starred restaurant, run by Christophe Pelé, revisits the classics of French cuisine with innovative, modern flourishes, which are all about enhancing the joy of fine dining. The menu is bespoke every day, depending on seasonal produce, and factors in all and any dietary requirements of the guests. The Inspiration menu, consisting of seven steps, is a must. It's a welcome chance to soak up the unique

The opulence and elegance of Le Clarence is matched by the menu of chef Christophe Pelé



The two Michelin-starred restaurant revisits the classics of French cuisine with innovative, modern flourishes

atmosphere as each new dish is placed before you. The perfectly considered plates on the day of visiting ranged from the meaty steak-like beef tomato, with fresh almond, red oxalis, buffalo milk and Pansy flower – paired with their home-grown La Clarté de Haut-Brion 2013, a delicate white wine, which features notes of delicate pineapple, caramelised citrus, honeysuckle and grapefruit. The avocado in herbal tempura-style and creamy green chilli, with fine flowers on top, is an addictive combination of creaminess and textured crunch that works exceptionally well with the citrus tang of the Domaine Ostertag Riesling Clos Mathis 2016.

The four small dessert plates: of lemon cream and watermelon water, cherry sorbet, raspberry iced parfait (with peach confit and cardamom cream) and the São Tomé chocolate and rum jelly, with its ganache richness are complemented with the effervescent Chartogne-Taillet Le Rose Brut Champagne. Every course and pairing is exciting, masterfully presented and somewhat grand.

Le Clarence, with its love of luxury, heritage and tradition, hosts an unique food and drink experience that you won't forget. Much like the French capital itself, it is pure romance.

LE-CLARENCE.PARIS

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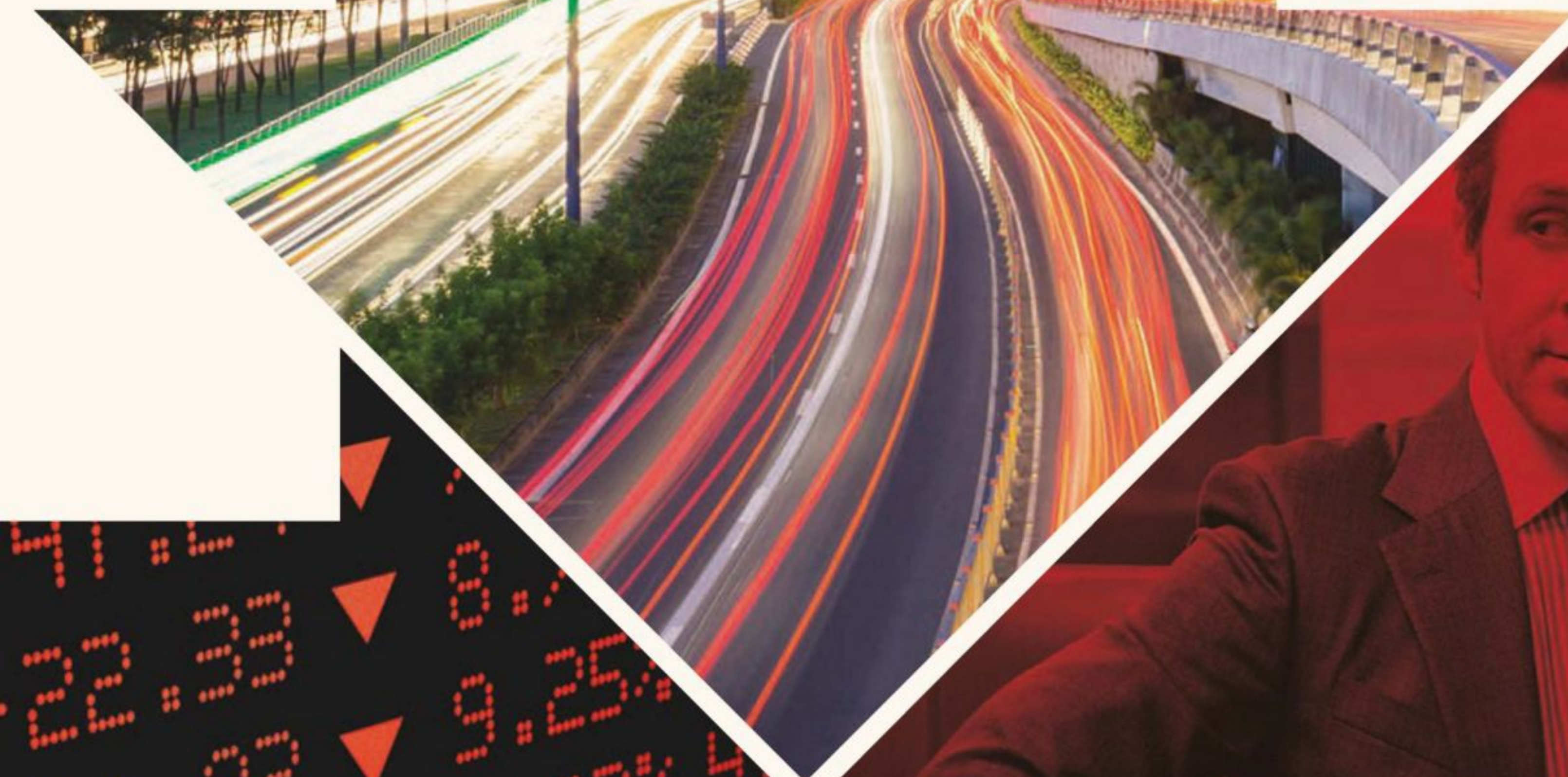
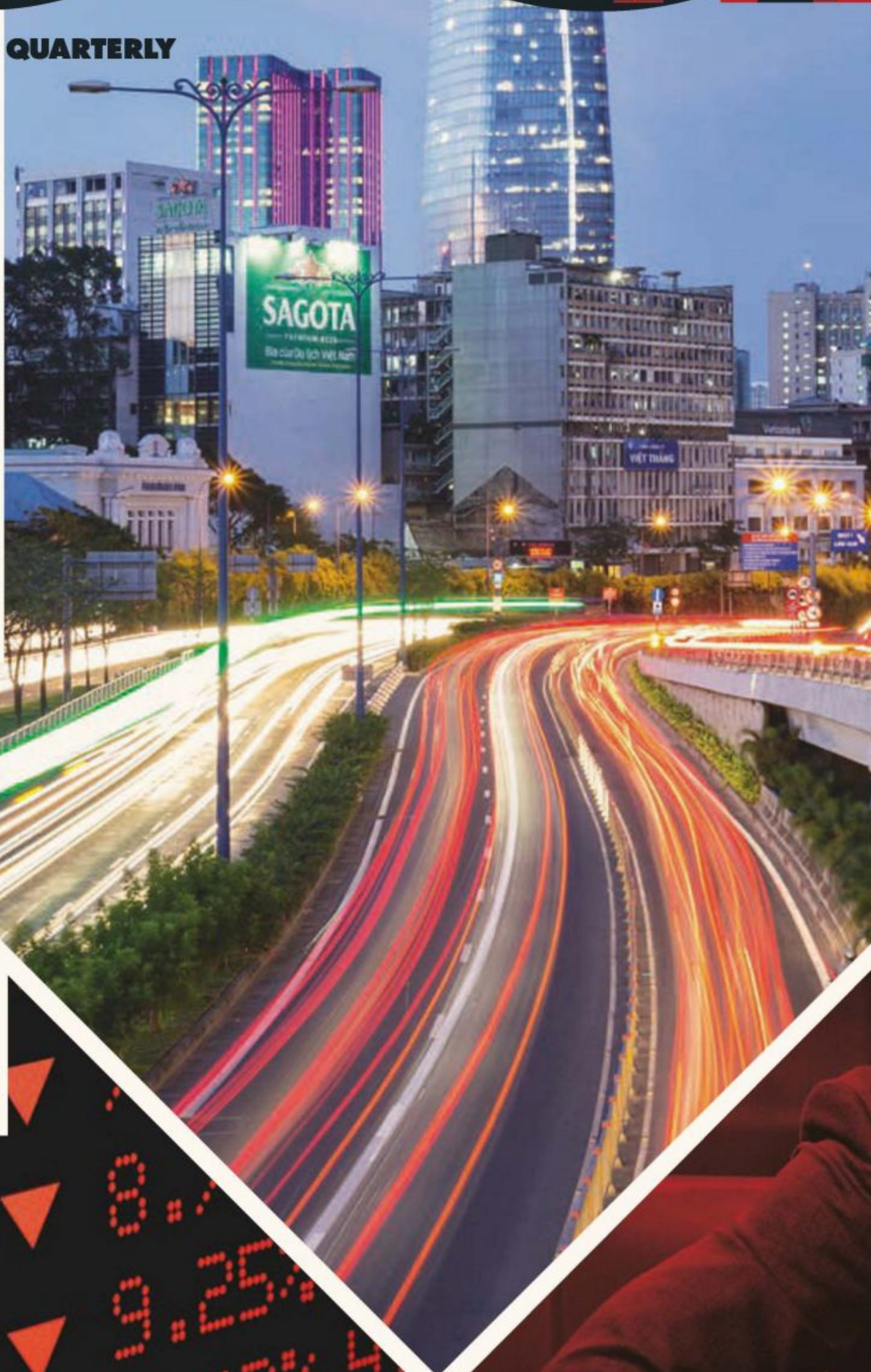
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BRITISH

The smart guide to investing

Money

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY



From grail watches
to finance hacks,
here's how to get your
money making money

Edited by **Charlie Burton**

Remember the Bitcoin gold rush? It was 2017 and the boondoggle internet currency was soaring in value. In January it had been changing hands for £650 a coin and by December it peaked at £12,489 and fomo-ers piled in with abandon. Inevitably, many bought at the top and got badly burned. Yet for all the woes, there was a peculiar positive. It gave investing an unlikely pop culture moment that lured dabblers into a world of bulls and bears and many have since made their first manoeuvres in traditional stocks and shares. Thus it struck us as the right time to launch *GQ Money*. In this inaugural edition, you'll find news, hacks and guides on all things investment, from apps to up your game to how to become a movie mogul (no, really), and from the new rules of personal finance to the one important asset to back right now. Spoiler alert: it's categorically not Bitcoin.

The 28 commandments of SUCCESSFUL INVESTING

Playing the markets shouldn't be a total crapshoot.
Here are the new rules – and timeless tactics – for managing your money in this mad climate

Story by **Laura Whateley**

1. Risk tolerance is not the same as guts

Emotion informs the risk you can take, sure. But Martin Bamford, managing director of financial planning company Informed Choice, says you should mainly assess your capacity for it. If your portfolio fell by 20 per cent, could you still feed the dogs?

2. Two words: drip feed

"Pound cost averaging" means if you invest monthly rather than in one go, any money you lose by putting it into a falling market should be made up for by the fact you're buying the following months at a lower price.

3. Diversify, but not to the point of dilution

Only a rube would put all their eggs in one basket. Yet there is such a thing as overdoing it. If you have too many investment funds, you might find shares overlap and you aren't as diversified as you thought. Rule of thumb: 20 funds is the limit.

4. Stash the cash

However bullish you're feeling, keep cash savings you can get hold of immediately – three to six months of outgoings ideally. Put it in an easy-access or regular savings account with the best return you can find; the Marcus account by Goldman Sachs is one of the most competitive.

5. Whisky! (Well, for now)

Whisky is emerging as an exciting asset class. The Knight Frank Rare Whisky 100 Index, which tracks UK auction prices, increased 40 per cent in 2018 – a bottle of 1926 Macallan recently sold for more than £1 million.

6. Play the long game

Don't try to time the market and don't tinker. As investment company Nutmeg proves (based on UK stock market data since 1969), investing for just one day gives you a 55.2 per cent chance of making gains. Investing for ten years, however, gives you a 99.4 per cent chance.

7. Orchestrate a crash course in M&A

Quickly.

8. Don't be a sheep

If something's much talked about, it will have been priced into shares and you could overpay. See: new tech unicorns such as Peloton, which fell ten per cent on its second day of trading.

9. Ethical investing is not only good but lucrative

You don't have to sacrifice returns to protect your principles. Some ethical funds have produced greater returns than their traditional equivalents. For example, the Rathbone Ethical Bond Fund delivered 10.2 per cent this year compared with 5.1 per cent for its Strategic Bond Fund.

10. Picking stocks? Only buy what you understand

Laura Suter of AJ Bell suggests, for example, that if you're a regular at the gym, look at brands or supplement companies; if you like motorbikes, look at parts suppliers and manufacturers. "When you examine the company's financials and prospects you'll understand the market and the lingo."

11. Turn up your BS detector

Sounds too good to be true? You're probably being scammed.

12. Beware the mini-bond

Bonds might be considered safer than equities, but avoid hyped niche products offering stellar returns. Mini-bonds have been in the spotlight after the collapse of London Capital & Finance, which owes £237m to 11,600 investors.

13. Don't invest for the sake of it

The whole point of making money is to fund the kind of life you want to lead. So how much money do you need to do that and when do you need it by? Invest to meet your life goals, rather than taking on risk for the sake of it.

14. Go for (a little bit of) gold

Prices of gold, a popular investment in times of tumult, have been soaring. Gold tends to move in a different direction from equities. You can buy physical gold, shares in mining companies or gold exchange traded commodities, which track gold prices. But Adrian Lowcock, chartered wealth manager for Willis Owen, suggests no more than five per cent of your portfolio.

15. Get into dope

Actually, you're too late. The smart money got into the cannabis business years ago.

16. Don't ignore your pension

No, it's not sexy. But if you have spare cash to invest, use at least some of it to take advantage of the ultra-generous tax breaks that come with pension contributions.

17. Watch those fees

The cost of investing dents your returns. Mike Barrett, of consultancy The Lang Cat, says if you invest £100,000 over 30 years, the difference between a one and two per cent charge is more than £100,000 in lost value.

18. And avoid exit fees in particular

Wealth manager St James's Place has been accused of ripping off customers by charging massive fees to customers wishing to leave. Hargreaves Lansdown has just scrapped its exit fees. Look for a firm that charges clear initial and ongoing charges only.

19. Don't ditch trackers

Michael Burry, of *The Big Short* fame, has warned there is a bubble in passive investment as more and more people choose cheap tracker funds. Few agree. Funds that track indices such as the FTSE 100 are great low-cost options as part of a wider portfolio.

20. Buying an active fund? Check you're getting what you pay for

Many "active managers" run closet trackers – the Financial Conduct Authority says £109 billion is tied up in them. Look at a fund's factsheet and whether its top ten holdings are the same as its benchmark stock market index. If they are, be cautious.

21. Interested in art? Look at blockchain companies

Crypto is a very risky area, but last year Christie's recorded the most valuable art auction ever on a blockchain, which is the technology underpinning Bitcoin et al, and said it reflected a growing interest across the art world.

22. Start investing early – even with small amounts

The eighth wonder of the world, according to Einstein, is compound interest. That's one of the reasons investing in equities is so powerful if you reinvest dividends. Those who understand it earn it; those who don't pay it.

23. Buyer beware

Rare watches, fine wine, vintage cars – all lucrative markets. Also, full of fakes. Just because Rolex Daytonas are generating big returns, doesn't mean *that* particular Rolex Daytona will generate a big return.

24. Your home may not be the bulletproof investment you think it is

Buying your own property is a form of investment – one that will likely save you money as mortgages are cheaper than rents at the moment – but don't assume house prices will always go up.

25. Don't get cocky

There is skill involved in making money, but also blind luck. The investor's worst enemy is his ego. Oh, and bragging about your investments? That doesn't endear you to anybody.

26. Beware the busting of the second dotcom bubble

All those tech companies running big losses to secure explosive growth? Proceed with caution.

27. Know an investment banker**28. Be an investment banker**

The contents of GQ Money does not constitute financial advice – you should always do your own research. You use this information at your own risk and we do not accept liability. If you wish to find out anything more about the topics covered in this supplement, please consult an independent financial advisor.

GIVE YOUR MONEY A TECH UPGRADE

If you want to up your finance game, there isn't an app for that – there are hundreds of them. So which are worth your time and money? Here's what we're going long on...

Robinhood

Best for: Share trading



We only suggest share picking if you know what you're doing, but if you want to try Robinhood offers more than 5,000 stocks and charges no commission or annual fee. The only catch? It has not yet launched in the UK. Until then, fee-conscious traders could try smaller apps such as Freetrade; while the Hargreaves Lansdown app has a significantly greater range of stocks. Available for iOS and Android. Free.

Moneyhub

Best for: Keeping track

Thanks to the UK's adoption of Open Banking standards, allowing account holders to share financial data securely with third-parties, Moneyhub aggregates your investments, borrowing, bank accounts and assets in one place. This allows you to gain insights into your spending and behaviour to make better decisions, helped along the way by its human advisors. Available for iOS and Android. £9.99 per year.

**Nutmeg**

Best for: Robo-investing

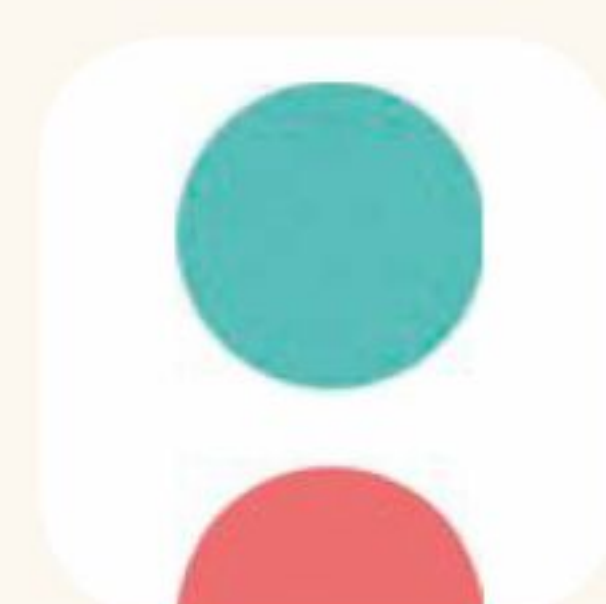


If you don't want to pick stocks yourself, leave it to a robo-advisor such as Nutmeg. Customers answer questions to allow Nutmeg to build a profile of their investing personality and preferences. Their money is then invested into a diversified portfolio of stocks designed to meet their needs. Fees are kept low and money can be withdrawn for free. Available for iOS and Android. Free.

Moneybox

Best for: Investing without realising

Moneybox rounds up your purchases to the nearest pound and puts the difference in the stock market. That may only mean that you're putting aside a few pennies at a time, but it adds up – all you have to do is decide whether you want the money go into the Cautious, Balanced or Adventurous funds. Available for iOS and Android. Free.



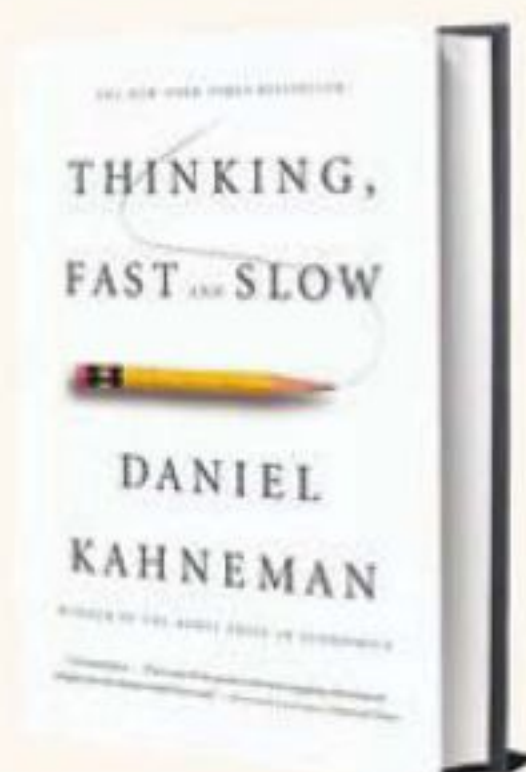
Speed read the gurus

We've studied the most influential investment books so you don't have to....

Thinking, Fast And Slow

by Daniel Kahneman (2011)

Key lesson: Don't let intuition block out logic. Acting fast on hunches is unhelpful – the least active traders tend to make the highest returns. If you need help keeping your impulses at bay, only check your investment balances quarterly.



Think And Grow Rich!

by Napoleon Hill (1937)

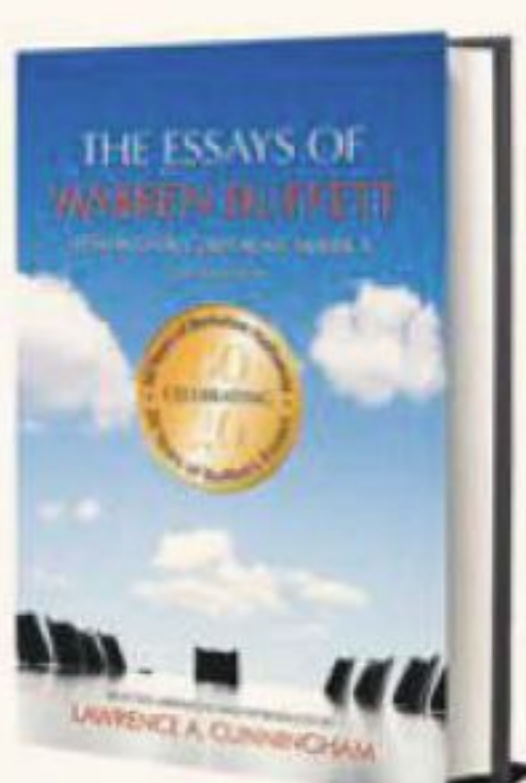
Key lesson: Maintain intense, unwavering visualisation of the end goal. This will kickstart your subconscious mind and, in turn, your imagination. When used to create a workable plan of action, you will be on the path to success. Basically, think yourself rich.



The Essays Of Warren Buffett

by Lawrence A Cunningham (1997)

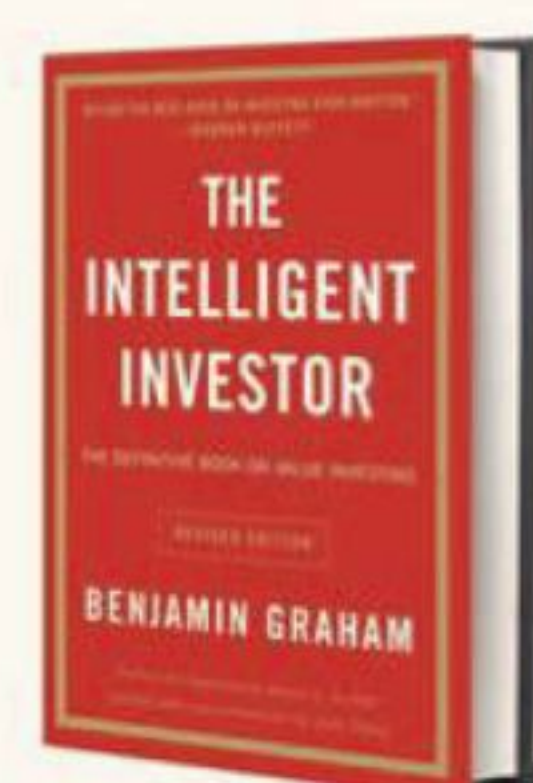
Key lesson: Compare price and value. Billed as “a coherent rearrangement of ideas from my annual report letters” by the man himself, the book’s overriding message is you have to be sure that the price paid is lower than the value obtained. Hoping that the price will rise is simply gambling.



The Intelligent Investor

by Benjamin Graham (1949)

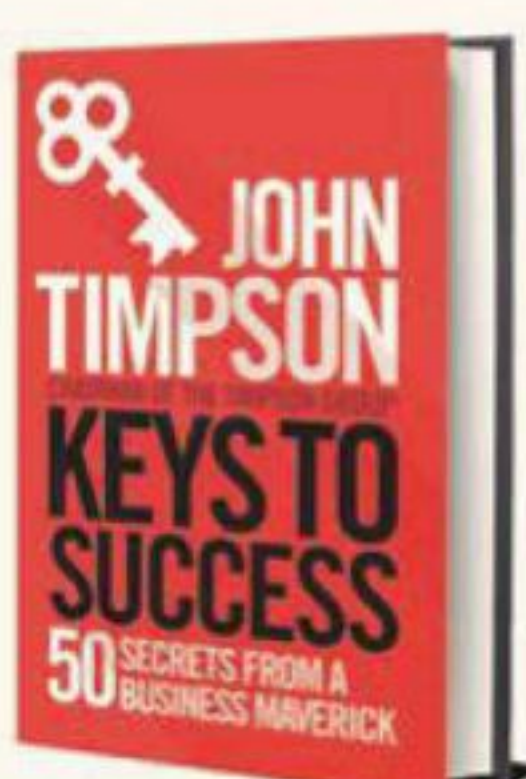
Key lesson: Always stick to the formula. Read and raved about by a 19-year-old Warren Buffett, it sets out three key principles: analyse the long-term (consider the future management goals of a company before you invest); protect yourself from losses (diversify investments); and don't go for crazy profits (focus on safe, steady returns).



Keys To Success

by John Timpson (2017)

Key lesson: Invest in your own business. Billionaires are not only made by investing in other people's companies. Timpson turned his key cutting and shoe repair business into a £220m multinational retailer against the odds. He thrived by “operating in an unfashionable sector” and investing in his people. His 4,700-strong workforce has access to holiday homes, bonuses and get a day off on their birthday.



Angel: How To Invest In Technology Start-Ups

by Jason Calacanis (2017)

Key lesson: Invest in what others don't understand. Calacanis, an early-stage Uber investor, says this improves your chances of getting in first and catching the business on the upswing. Still, you have to “get very comfortable with the concept of losing seven, eight, nine out of ten bets”. **Emily Wright**



Money hacks of the savings geeks

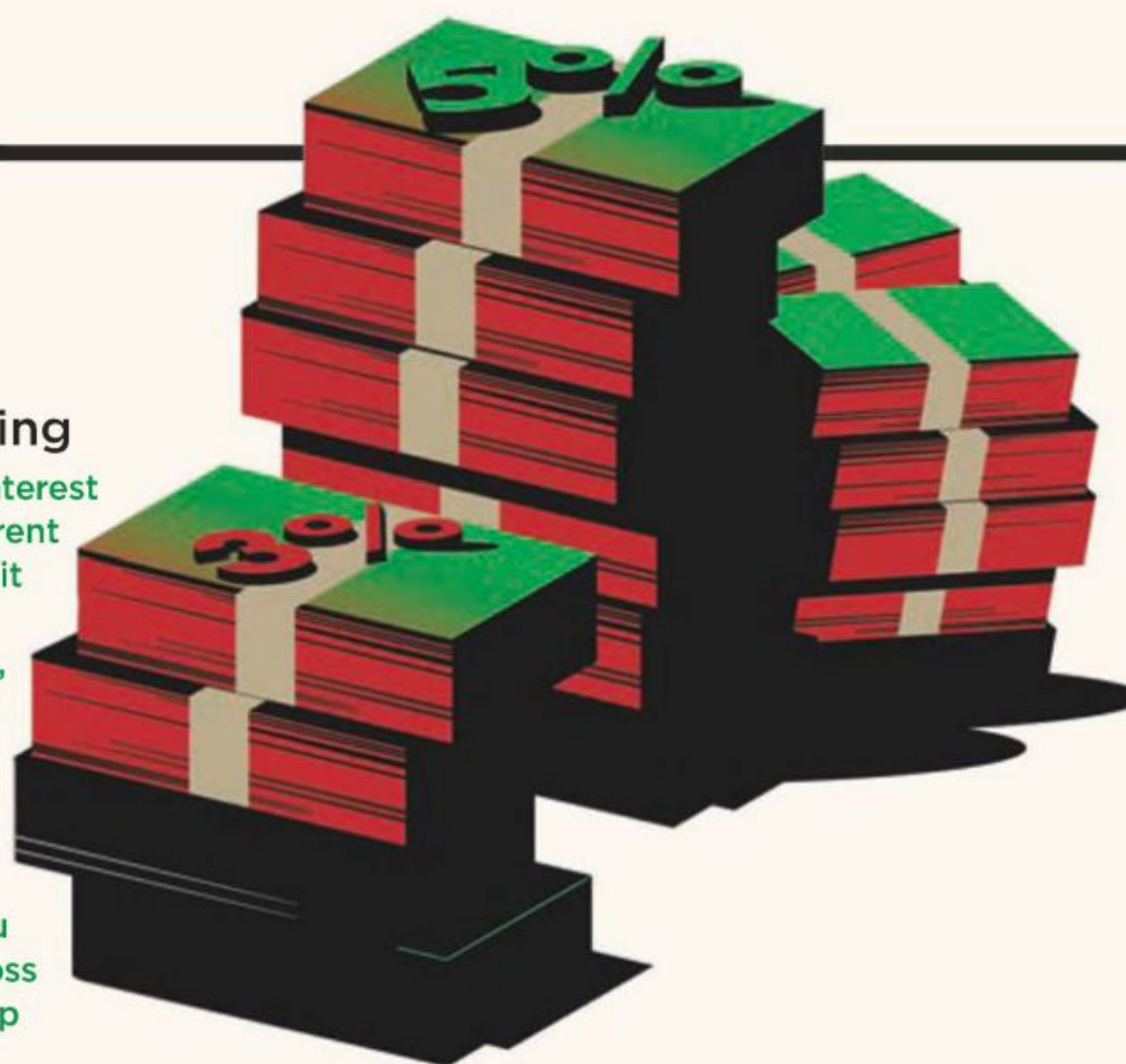
Two insider strategies for your consideration...*

1. Stoozing

Popularised by a money forum user called Stooz, this technique is lucrative – as long as you have self-discipline and you are not in any debt. The core idea is to put all of your usual expenditure through a credit card that has a promotional zero per cent interest rate. Keep the cash that you would otherwise be spending in a high interest savings account, and only pay off the minimum monthly amount of the credit card. When the zero per cent offer terminates, pay off the debt or move it to a low-fee balance transfer card that also offers zero per cent interest. Note: problems will arise if you overspend on the credit card and can't pay off the debt.

2. Current account spreading

Savings accounts offer woefully low interest rates but, counterintuitively, some current accounts offer decent rates on in-credit balances up to a capped amount. For example, at the time of going to press, Nationwide's FlexDirect account pays five per cent on up to £2,500 for a year; TSB's Classic Plus account pays three per cent on up to £1,500. Assuming you can meet the criteria, such as minimum monthly pay-ins, you can open a multitude of accounts across different banks and fill each of them up to the interest-paying cap.

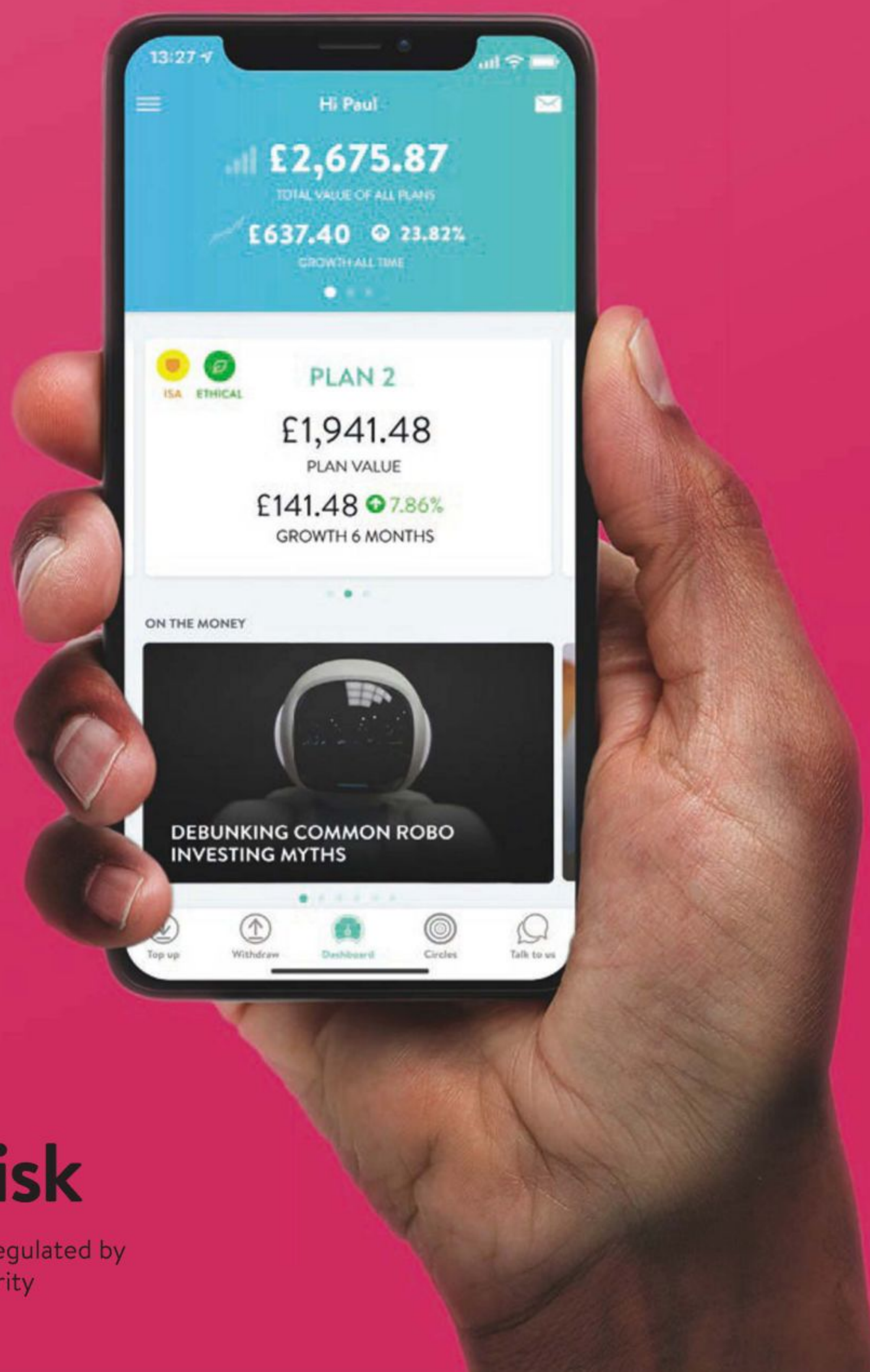




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You SHOULD buy the HYPE

'The Stock Market Of Things' has become the most trusted way to invest in hypebeast products

Last November, Nike issued a pair of Air Jordan 1s with the words "Not for resale" printed on the sole. It was a playful reference to the increasing fetishisation of sneakers and the booming grey market that has sprung up around them. Of course, given that one colourway of these particular Air Jordans would only be available for purchase at a single shop in Los Angeles, they were instant collector's items – and in the sneaker world that makes them valuable investment assets. "Not for resale"? Fat chance. The \$160 shoes immediately appeared on StockX, the go-to platform for buying and selling hype products. Prices for those Nikes over the past year have peaked at £2,161.

StockX has ridden the recent surge of interest in rare sneakers to expand into other items that have hypebeast appeal. Today, the site also trades in streetwear, watches, handbags and collectibles – and has particular appeal to those who want to treat their purchases as serious investments. It's no accident that it's called StockX: the company bills the platform as "The world's first Stock Market Of Things". Buyers place bids for items, sellers place asks, and when the two are aligned the transaction goes ahead. StockX makes available historical transaction data, providing the market with a telling picture of value over time. Compare that to the old days, when to find a pair of Yeezys meant trawling eBay or social media and never quite knowing if you were being stung. There was also, clearly, another problem with that Wild West – fakes are rife, so were you buying a genuine article? StockX solves that problem too with its army of authenticators who make sure that everything listed is the real deal.

All of which is to say, if you want to know what's actually hot right now, check out the most profitable items on the platform. Here's what has been getting all the hype this year, and why...

Presenting:
the most profitable
products from the
hottest brands on StockX

▲ Nike

Trophy Room x Air Jordan 5 Retro 'Friends & Family' (2,488% profit)

▲ Fragment Design

FRGMT x Pokemon mascot
(1,025% profit)

▲ Palace

Palace Tokyo Store Opening
Tri-Ferg T-shirt (560% profit)

▲ Adidas

Yeezy Boost 350 V2 trainers
(527% profit)

▲ Supreme

Supreme OAMC vintage military
liner jacket (490% profit)

▲ Casio

Casio G-Shock x Gorillaz Limited Edition
'Noodle' watch (347% profit)

▲ FTP

Logo beanie hat (339% profit)

▲ Kaws

Pink plush figure (302% profit)

▲ Louis Vuitton

Louis Vuitton x Supreme
Porte Carte wallet (239% profit)

▲ A Bathing Ape

Be@rbrick figurine (204% profit)

Travis Scott x Reese's Puffs

Silver spoon (190% profit)

▲ Goyard

Grand Bleu messenger
bag (161% profit)

▲ Takashi Murakami

ComplexCon Discord
Pin (160% profit)

▲ Gucci

GucciGhost tote bag (144% profit)

▲ Seiko

Seiko x A Bathing Ape mechanical
dive watch (120% profit)

▲ TAG Heuer

Carrera Skipper
for Hodinkee (109% profit)

▲ Rolex

GMT Master II 'Pepsi' (89% profit)



Investing in: Streetwear

Expert **Elgar Johnson**

Within the last ten years streetwear has become the dominant factor in fashion. It has changed the way we dress in and out of office. The relaxed nature of streetwear has shown it to be the most versatile form of fashion and something that people of all ages can now include in their wardrobe.



Investing in: Watches

Expert **Bill Prince**

Investing in watches can appear highly exclusive, but the secondary market offers the chance to pick up limited series developed in collaboration with streetwear labels – even if the smart money continues to reside with "grail pieces" by the industry's big beasts such as Rolex and Patek Philippe.



Investing in: Collectibles

Expert **Charlie Burton**

The world of "art toys" is a controversial one but the market is firing on all cylinders. In 2017, Moma in New York announced it would be stocking a limited-edition figurine by the street artist Kaws, and its website crashed. These items offer an affordable route to owning a piece by a major name.



◀ Seiko x
A Bathing Ape
Mechanical
Divers Watch

Seiko dive watches have been collectible since they launched in the Sixties and this example was launched to celebrate A Bathing Ape's 25th anniversary last year.

▶ MediCom
Be@rbrick x
Neighborhood x
A Bathing Ape

This collaboration with Japanese brands Neighborhood and A Bathing Ape – two of streetwear's most influential – and toy company MediCom crosses the hypebeast streams and is wildly sought after.



▼ Air Jordan 1 x
Travis Scott

Collaborations are rife at the moment but when you have your own trainer it puts you in a different league. Travis Scott teamed up with Nike to create his.



▼ Takashi
Murakami
ComplexCon
Discord Pin

Every year, Japanese modern art powerhouse Takashi Murakami releases limited-edition collectibles for the huge street-culture convention ComplexCon, such as this "Mr Dob" pin.



◀ Rolex GMT
Master II Pepsi
Dubbed the "Pepsi"
on account of its red
and blue bezel, the
GMT Master II is the
grail Rolex watch of
the moment, thanks
to its timely re-arrival
in a fit-for-purpose
stainless-steel case.

▼ Palace Tokyo
Store Opening
Tri-Ferg T-shirt

Palace has single-handedly taken on the power of Supreme and more than held its own. The Tri-Ferg is a classic Palace tee, made to mark its Tokyo opening.

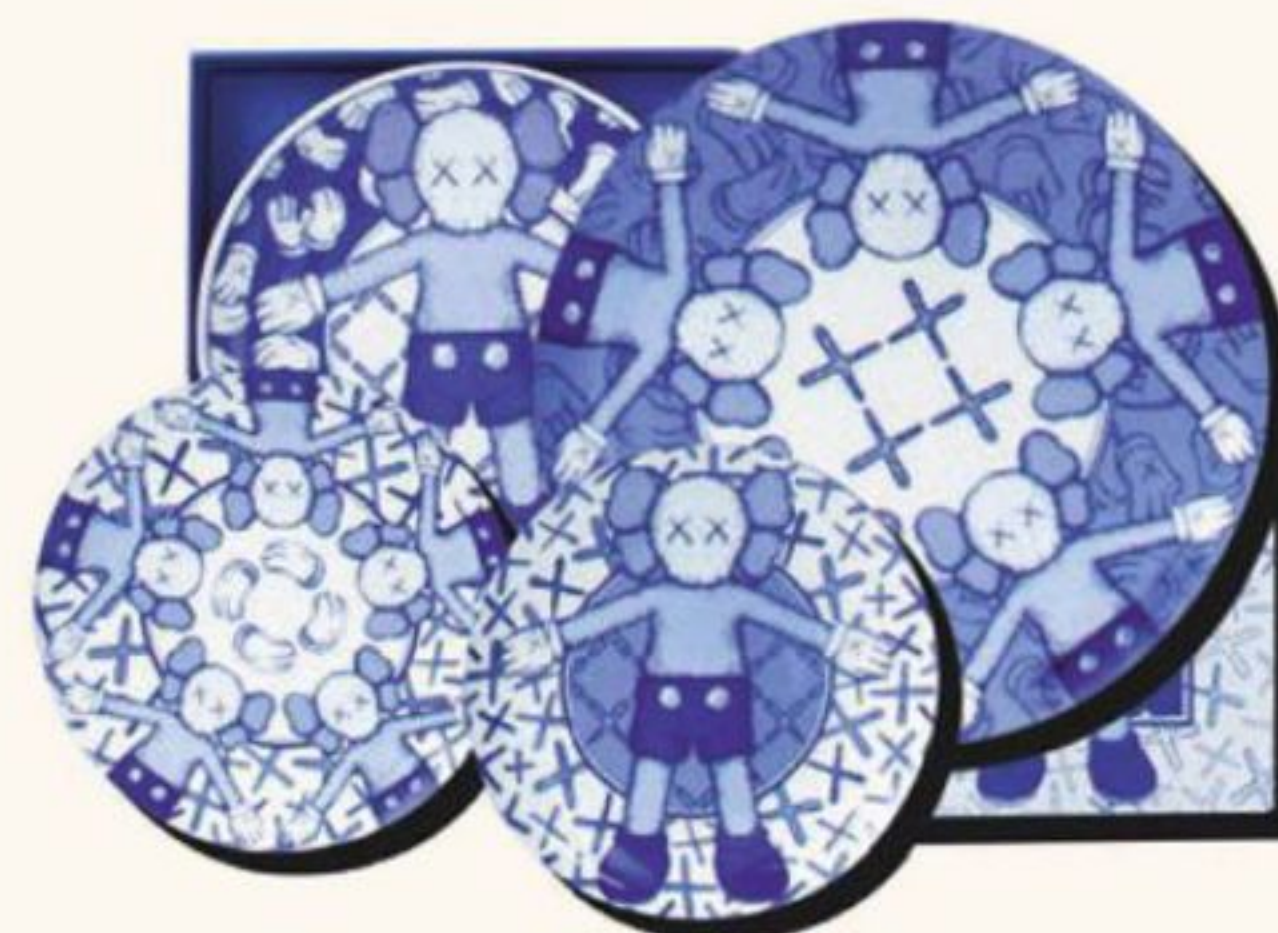


▲ Supreme x Louis
Vuitton Bumbag

Supreme is a game-changer when it comes to streetwear and arguably the greatest collaborator in the industry. So since collaborating with Louis Vuitton, the world has never been the same.

▲ Casio G-Shock
x Gorillaz
Limited Edition

G-Shock watches are cult objects that far outweigh their value as a timepiece. A second collaboration with Gorillaz delivers the classic DW5600 in a range of colourways.



▶ Kaws Holiday
Limited Ceramic
Plates

In 1999, Kaws (AKA Brian Donnelly) invented "The Companion": a subversive Mickey Mouse-like figure. This year, it appears on crockery for an installation in Taipei's Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall.

THE HOT LIST

These are the alternative assets delivering big returns this year.
If you're able to get your hands on them, that is...

Eleven years after the fall of Saigon, the victorious communists introduced their “Doi Moi” economic reforms. This set in motion a chain of events that has since seen the former Tiger Cub quietly grow into one of Asia’s most dynamic economies – and smart investors are taking notice.

“This is the most exciting investment opportunity of my 30-year career,” says Tim Price, director of fund managers Price Value Partners says. Enticingly, the country is still classified as a “frontier” market, not an “emerging” market, by benchmark provider MSCI. “Tens of billions of dollars will cascade into this market when MSCI upgrades it to ‘emerging’.”

Look under the hood and you can see why Vietnam is so strong. It has a minimum wage of \$180 per month, attractive demographics, 95 million people, a strategic location, cheap energy, political stability and a spread of foreign direct investment. The country is also reaping dividends from Donald Trump’s trade



Ho Chi Minh City's business district could make a worthy investment

Good morning, VIETNAM!

Why savvy investors are piling into Asia's rising star

war with China, as global manufacturers shift production from the People's Republic Of China to Vietnam, as US tariffs start to bite. As Roddy Snell, the manager of Pacific Horizon at Baillie Gifford, puts it, “You have a fantastic structural growth story, really attractive valuations, a market that’s opening up and a rock solid economy.”

So how can Western investors get a piece of the action? One way is by investing in the London-listed Vietnam Enterprise Investments

Limited (VEIL). Founded in 1995, this is managed by Dragon Capital and invests exclusively in the southeast Asian country. Another is through VinaCapital Vietnam Opportunity Fund (VOF, also London-listed), which unlike the more established VEIL can also steer investors’ cash into unlisted companies. There is also one index-tracker fund focused on Vietnam – DWS’s Xtrackers FTSE Vietnam Swap.

The danger with anything that becomes

suddenly hot is you can get burnt. Paul Gambles of Thailand-based MBMG Investment Advisory warns that “any credit crunch would be painful for Vietnam”. So, if you’re more interested in spreading your risk across a range of frontier and emerging markets, several funds have ten to 15 per cent of their portfolios invested in Vietnam. These include Aberdeen Frontier Markets, T Rowe Price Frontier Markets, and Baillie Gifford Pacific Horizon. Your move. **Ian Fraser**



How to become a movie mogul

Over £1.9bn was invested in more than 200 UK-based films last year. Tempted to buy in? Here’s how

1. Decide on your approach

It’s easier than ever for casual investors to put in smaller amounts of capital. Goldfinch Studios, Ingenious Media, Enterprise Investment Partners and Motion Picture Capital all open funds spanning a slate of films for a typical minimum investment of around £50,000, though some, such as Enterprise’s Hindsight Media Fund, accept as little as £10,000.

2. Follow the trends

The proliferation of streaming services means appetite for genre films with smallish budgets of around £5m has exploded. Avoid the crowded market for low-budget horror, says Phil McKenzie, COO of Goldfinch. Similarly, steer clear of sci-fi with a low CGI budget as it will make faraway galaxies look fake or cheap. Action is the safest bet: a fight scene doesn’t need translating so can easily find a market abroad.

3. Do your due diligence

Seek out production and distribution teams with a proven track record and get commitments in writing before handing money over. “Investing in film is like any asset class,” says McKenzie. “Don’t get red-carpet fever. Sales projections are based on the stars. If someone says, ‘I’ve got Phoebe Waller-Bridge and Tom Cruise in this’ – have they got letters of intent or contracts in place?” Well, have they? **Thomas Barrie**



SURPRISE: Here's £10,000. What are YOU going to do with it?

It's a classic windfall amount. A small inheritance, a bonus – perhaps even a decent win at the poker table. We spoke to a financial planner and an investment expert; here's what they had to say for three personality types...



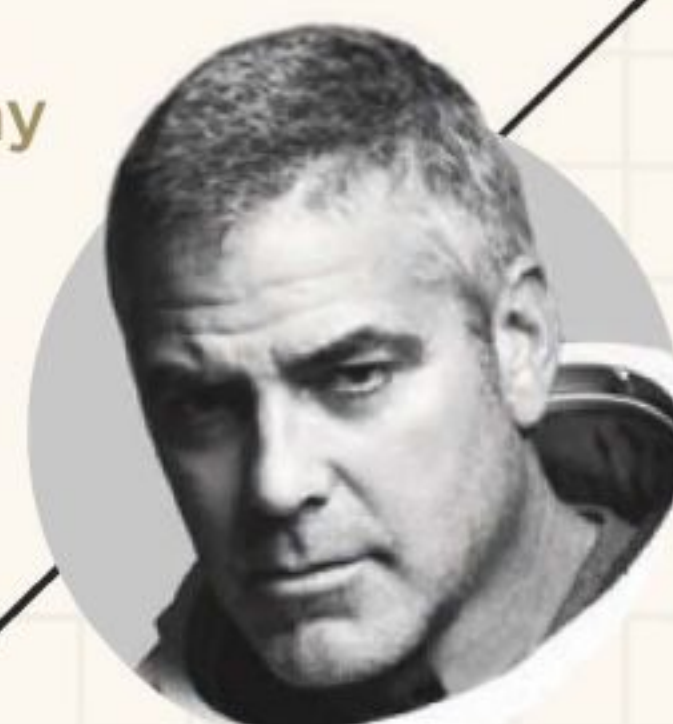
Andy Stitzer from The 40-Year-Old Virgin

Risk-averse

Investing timeframe: 30+ years

Laura Thursfield, a financial planner at accountancy firm Mazars, says that pensions are the safest bet. "There is a trade-off: you receive tax relief at your highest marginal rate for personal pension contributions; however, access is restricted until you're 55. Once funds are inside a pension, they grow tax-free and it's a really efficient vehicle for long-term saving, but they are absolutely long-term savings."

Keep in mind that you want your pension to grow in real terms, too – in other words, at a faster rate than inflation, which is currently around two per cent.



Lt. Matthew Kowalski from Gravity

Will take risks – but only when he has to

Investing timeframe: Around five years

"A five-year horizon is when the year-to-year volatility starts to smooth," says Thursfield. "That's when we start thinking about stocks and shares ISAs."

The usual method is to buy a stocks and shares ISA with a provider, then invest it in a managed fund with a diverse balance of assets such as those offered by Legal & General, Scottish Widows, Aviva and others. A middle-of-the-road fund will comprise about 50 to 60 per cent equities, spread across multiple international markets, and about 30 per cent in fixed-interest assets such as government and corporate bonds.

"You put £10,000 in, for example, the Legal & General Multi-Index 5 fund, which is a balanced fund. Those sorts of funds are really, really useful for smaller pots such as this because they're risk-managed. They have cautious and balanced growth and they tend to be competitive on cost."



Jordan Belfort from The Wolf Of Wall Street

"...have you got the guts to live?"

Investing timeframe: Under five years

Investing short-term is akin to gambling: be sure that anything you're willing to risk, you're willing to lose. First of all, says Thursfield, make sure you have sufficient cash reserves, ideally of three to six months' expenditure.

Thrill seekers might look at directly holding assets, buying them personally rather than through a fund, and "trading them quite quickly on whatever platform you use". There will be little to no insulation from the market and if you're willing to hold stocks and shares in person, you will be going up against the pros – the hedge funds and massive institutional investors that employ thousands of full-time traders. Remember to diversify, though, to make your portfolio more resistant to shocks.

So what to buy? Beware newly floated companies, says Ian Harnett, chief investment strategist at Absolute Strategy Research, which is currently working on the assumption that a recession is imminent. "The IPO market gets trickier as you get closer to a recessionary environment. You need to do your homework." **TB**



Why every new investor needs to watch The Money Pit



There's plenty that Hollywood can teach the newbie investor. *The Wolf Of Wall Street* shows the dangers of penny stocks; *The Big Short* is a reminder that the experts don't know it all; and *Margin Call*'s portrayal of the 2008 crash is proof that past performance is not an indicator of future success. But the most important flick for any greenhorn? *The Money Pit*. This 1986 comedy turns on a distress-sale mansion: it's on the market for \$200,000 but it's apparently worth \$1m. All is not what it seems – it falls apart, drowning the buyers (Tom Hanks and Shelley Long) in mounting costs. It hammers home a warning: if it seems too good to be true, it probably is. And in the current climate of flaky cryptocurrencies and high-profile scams, that maxim is more important than ever.



**Bargain-hungry
investors can learn
from Tom Hanks**

Watch the fledgling stars of Stamford Bridge develop from the comfort of Club Chelsea

Think INSIDE THE BOX

Attention to detail and a laidback ethos make Club Chelsea the Premier League's true hospitality champion

There's a roar outside, and we spill our Champagne in the rush to down glasses and race to see what has happened. Mason Mount has been brought down in the box. It's a stonewall penalty: Jorginho steps up. After a brief delay, the whistle goes, and he sinks the ball into the bottom left-hand corner of the net in front of a raucous Matthew Harding Stand – 40,000 fans erupt. Forty-nine minutes in, the deadlock at Stamford Bridge has been broken.

We didn't notice the second half kicking off because we're on the fourth of four lunch courses in our Club Chelsea box, and staff

have been all-too-obligingly topping us up for most of the afternoon. The day has gone a little like this: a walk out through the tunnel for pitchside photos and a quick go sitting in the dugout, where a handful of club icons are hanging out and dashing off autographs like confetti. Then it's upstairs for sushi canapes and Champagne (or wine, or beer, or pretty much anything you like); appetisers of beef wellington, carpaccio, smoked salmon, green salad; then a buffet – chicken and dauphinois potatoes, in this case, though there are other options including a happily simple pasta bake.

At 3pm, the match kicks off, which means stepping out onto the panoramic second-tier balcony to watch 45 minutes of Frank

Lampard's gloriously talented youngsters running full pelt at terrified (in this case, Brighton) centre-backs, before cheese and dessert at half-time. And more Champagne.

Just under 6,000 seats of Stamford Bridge's 42,000 capacity are given over to matchday hospitality packages. There are 58 boxes, 22 suites and packages that range from a glass of Champagne on arrival and a comfortable padded seat to the full four-course dining affair. Ours is one of the top-end Diamond Suites, a sleek, discreet room of plate glass and brushed steel on the upper West Stand with a capacity of 16, decked out with signed, framed Chelsea strips. You can call one of these your own for the whole season or seats can be bought on a match-by-match basis.

Other Premier League stadiums offer ultra-high-end hospitality – they'll remain unnamed; you can guess which – but they lack this attention to detail. Whoever masterminded Club Chelsea was smart enough to know that flexible formality is key to true comfort; in fact, as you climb the various tiers of hospitality offered, the dress code becomes more casual, not less. A millionaire's uniform is a Savile Row suit and a silk tie, but a billionaire won't bother with a tie at all (don't believe us? Consider Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich himself). The service



Whether you're more enamoured with Laurent-Perrier or Ron Harris, you're equally well catered for

From box to *BOX*

How the day unfolds...



Dining

The food in the Diamond Suites is so good it's easy to miss the action on the pitch. Start with a glass of Laurent-Perrier (we recommend the pink), accompanied by sushi canapés and bite-sized beef wellington and carpaccio. The buffet service means you can eat as much as you like of whatever you like. For the Brighton game, there was roast chicken, pasta, steamed vegetables, more beef and dauphinoise potatoes to choose from. It felt like Christmas.



Access

The Club Chelsea experience includes a walk through the tunnel to go pitchside before the game, giving you a look at the massive operation that keeps this huge club running. In the dugout, we met Chelsea legends including John Bumstead, Paul Canoville and the club's third-highest goalscorer Kerry Dixon.



Matchday meet and greet

After the final whistle, a player in the matchday squad will come up to the box. In our case, a hugely obliging and clearly exhausted Andreas Christensen was kind enough to pose for selfies and a quick chat about the game. He'd just played 95 minutes of football and was refuelling – literally, in this case – turning up with a slice of pizza in hand.



is immaculate: not overbearing, but always on-hand. The club magician pops in for some genuinely astounding vanishing tricks. A photographer floats leisurely in and out of the box, as do ex-players. Staff are charmingly open: we meet a number of admitted non-Chelsea fans among them, and they're comfortable enough within the club hierarchy to chat about football freely. It's a nice touch.

Club Chelsea's hospitality savvily pairs this luxury experience with top-class football and access to players and pitch. As a result, it's a brilliant investment not only for those who are Premier League or Chelsea fans, but also anyone who wants a world-class West London location to enjoy Champagne and fine dining, with entertainment attached. Step into the stands, and you can see a banner of block capitals hung high over Stamford Bridge's Shed End: Pride of London. It's apt, though Chelsea's stars aren't confined to the pitch. When your next-door neighbours at every home game are the leading names in tech, fashion, finance, industry and the arts, the networking opportunities are unparalleled. Whether you're more enamoured with Laurent-Perrier or Ron Harris, you're equally well catered for.

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1. How are they... holidaying?

As far as remote travel goes, safaris have a good baseline of seclusion. But for a truly off-grid experience, an Ethiopian helicopter safari is your best bet. Bespoke travel company Journeys By Design – a favourite of everyone from Ralph Lauren to Guy Pelly – promises to take clients to locations where “fewer people have stood than on the surface of the moon” (for prices that top \$950,000). Every stop on the way is accessible only by air and boasts complete privacy. journeysbydesign.com



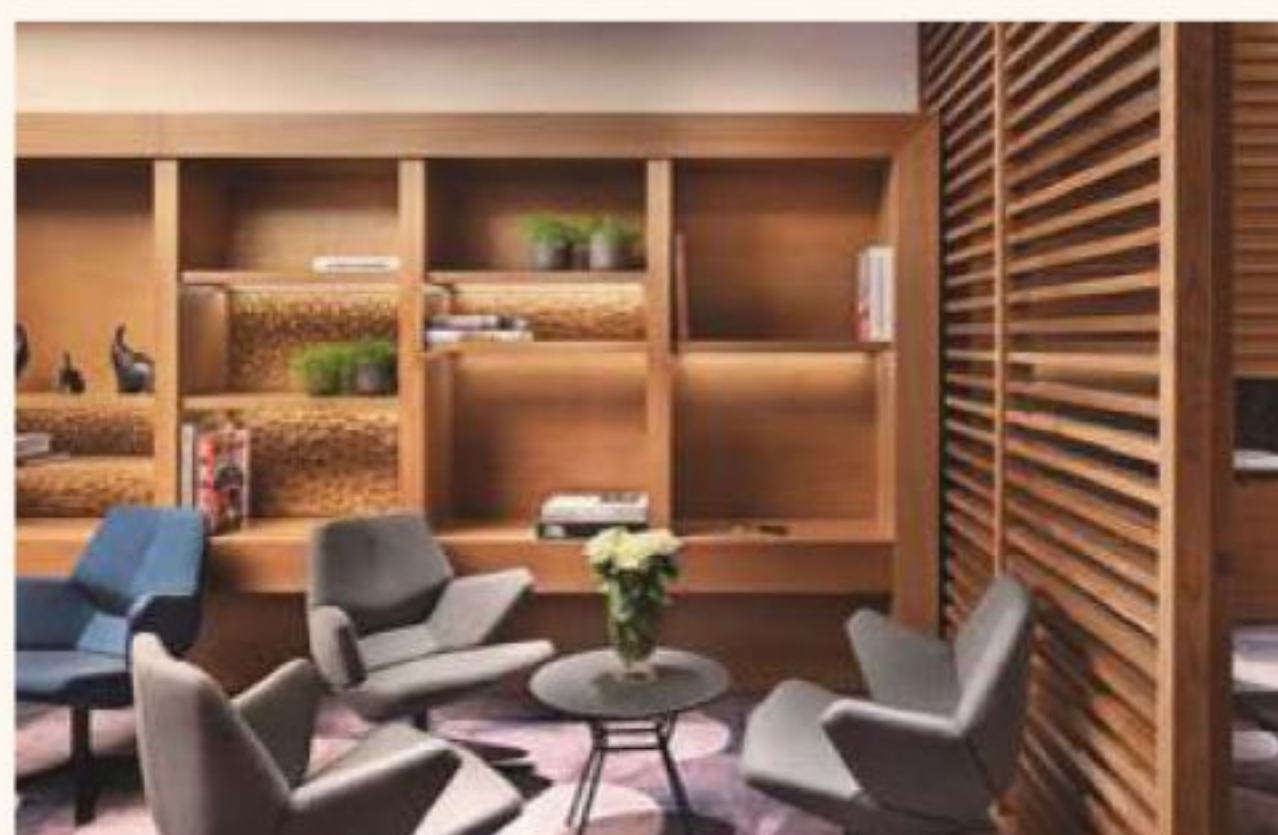
2. Where are they... dining?

As the likes of Gwyneth Paltrow, Tom Cruise and Bill Gates flock to the isolated wilds of Iceland, a dining experience in the heart of the wilderness has emerged as a stealth wealth go-to. Surrounded by volcanic black rock for miles around, the restaurant at Hotel Ranga is a favourite with Jake Gyllenhaal and Justin Bieber. It's fine dining at its most casual: guests wear snow shoes and thick knits. From the reindeer carpaccio to the \$80 langoustine, this is food to fly in for. hotelranga.is



You've made it! NOW DISAPPEAR

When you have reached the lofty upper echelons of fame and fortune there is no greater luxury than invisibility. Hence the move among the 0.001% towards stealth wealth – in their wardrobes and their lifestyle



3. Where are they... landing?

One of the most expensive cities in the world in 2019, and home to a plethora of real estate and tech billionaires, Tel Aviv has become the latest airport to offer a private VIP terminal. Launched this year, the Fattal Terminal at Ben Gurion International Airport was designed for high-wealth passengers, government officials, ambassadors, celebrities and those travelling on private plane, allowing them to transition in and out of the country quickly and privately. For a \$400 fee, passengers can access the 14,000 square feet, \$5m terminal where hidden rooms, luxurious showers, stewards and private transfers across the tarmac await.

4. Where are they... buying houses?

With its tree-lined streets, hidden mansions and close proximity to both New York City and some of the top schools in America, Connecticut is the perfect spot for an under-the-radar property purchase. It's less showy than LA's “Hidden Hills” gated community, but prices still soar well into the multimillions. The waterfront town of Greenwich – home to Mel Gibson, Jane Fonda, Tommy Hilfiger and Ron Howard – is one of the state's most exclusive areas; Belle Haven, Clapboard Ridge Road and Beechcroft Road, where a four-bedroom mansion will set you back \$8.5m, are among the most sought after addresses. **EW**



Invest in YOURSELF

Your most valuable asset? You



Executive life coach
Michael Serwa

While there's an undeniable thrill to the prospect of an investment going through the roof, realistically your best chance of actually becoming significantly wealthier is to get paid more. So invest in yourself. Companies such as Seven Career Coaching, Lee Hecht Harrison Penna and Personal Career Management will review and polish your CV, coach you in public speaking and interview technique and advise you on career changes. For the truly committed, however, there's executive life coaching.

Michael Serwa (michaelserwa.com) is one of the UK's most expensive, charging up to £30,000 for his programmes. Serwa begins by asking his clients to score themselves numerically in 25 different categories spanning “love life, career, finance, work-life balance, health, fitness, confidence level, motivation”. Then, he and his client will focus on their lowest-scoring areas, working on the assumption that career success and overall wellbeing are inextricable.

“Almost always,” says Serwa, “the ‘general happiness’ score at the bottom is the exact average of all the other scores.”

Serwa insists the most important ingredient in achieving real change is acting as an outside force that can both teach clients and hold them to account. “There are people who specialise in all the things one could use help with. It's about finding those people, hiring them and having them help us to become the best version of ourselves.”

His technique combines tough love with micromanagement to eradicate bad habits. “I had the top cardiologist in his country,” Serwa recalls. “[He said,] ‘I need to sleep more.’ So I had him messaging me every day to report that he was in bed at a certain time, to make sure that he got his eight hours. I don't just ask them to commit to doing something; I ask them to message me daily telling me that they have done it.” Next time you catch yourself feeling underpowered in the boardroom, you know who to call. **TB GQ**

ROBERT DE NIRO

YEAAH!

He's talking

TOUS

It's been too long: Martin Scorsese and Robert De Niro, together on set, making the kind of mafia movie that defined the closing decades of the 20th century. And, while *The Irishman* owes its existence to a very modern model of film-making, it is, of course, a swansong, a retrospective even. De Niro doesn't do interviews. But for this, he did. Here, he speaks to GQ about rejoining Pacino and Pesci on screen, memories of his father, Marlon Brando and old New York, and the blood on Trump's hands for the crimes of his followers

Story by **Stuart McGurk**

Photographs by **Charlie Gray**

Styled by **Aude Bronson-Howard**



Robert De Niro
photographed for
British GQ at The
Greenwich Hotel,
New York, 1 August

Coat by **Brunello
Cucinelli**, £5,100.
brunellocucinelli.com

'I said to Marty,
"We have to do this.
Joe plays Russell.
Al plays Hoffa."
[This is] probably our
last movie together'

ROBERT DE NIRO

Coat, £3,300. Shirt, £260.
Trousers, £540. All by
Armani. armani.com





'I notice it with the autograph people. It's my older movies they ask me to sign: Casino, Goodfellas, Godfather'

'Mr De Niro is in the building'

Sitting in The Greenwich Hotel in New York, the grand if petite building that Robert De Niro co-owns on the Hudson side of Manhattan, I receive what I estimate to be the ninth update on Mr De Niro's whereabouts. He is, I'm reliably informed, closing in.

De Niro, you see, has been on a plane, travelling back from LA, where he's had meetings, to New York, where he's meeting me. And so the first inevitable message I receive is about how his flight is delayed.

"But Bob is in the air now," I'm told by one of his assistants. "Maybe just arrive half an hour later than planned."

I do, and an assistant deposits me on a corner table of the hotel's garden courtyard.

"Bob's on the way. He'll be 20 minutes."

After 25 minutes I get an email: "Bob is ten minutes away and knows where you're seated, so he'll meet you there shortly."

After another 15 minutes I start to get unsolicited updates from kindly members of the serving staff, who report on De Niro's movements like spies performing reconnaissance on an encroaching army.

"I've just seen him. Mr De Niro is in the building," one tells me.

Another 15 minutes pass.

"He's here," says another, "but I saw him getting the lift. I think he's gone to a room to freshen up."

Another 15 minutes pass.

At this point I should note I'm not a nervous interviewer. But I am, it turns out, a nervous waiter. As each estimated arrival recedes into the distance only to be replaced by another, I find myself watching the door to the courtyard like a sprinter at a starters' block, permanently primed. I think I can actually feel my nerves shredding.

Well, of course you can, you'll say. It's Robert. *Freaking*. De Niro.

And you'd be correct, but for the wrong reason: I'm not star-struck. I'm very specifically De Niro-terrified. >>

>> De Niro, you see, has something of a reputation. In his five decades of being song lyric-famous, De Niro has sat for just a handful of extended print interviews. Of these, most have been abject failures, with a select few being catastrophes. Questions are invariably questioned. Dictaphones are often turned off. He's also been known to walk out. Those were the lucky ones. At least they got something to write about.

Often, this is put down to De Niro's "intense privacy". But on this point I'd like to issue a correction: De Niro doesn't talk about *anything*.

And yet, to promote *The Irishman* – his new masterpiece-in-waiting, a reunion with Martin Scorsese and Al Pacino and Joe Pesci – De Niro, now 76, has agreed to be interviewed by *GQ* for an hour, which sounds like a lot until you consider he once agreed to be interviewed by our American sister magazine for four hours when he was promoting his 2006 directorial effort, *The Good Shepherd*, and the interview still went so badly that the headline read, "And Now, 972 Words From Robert De Niro".

"I am determined of one thing," wrote the interviewer Chris Heath. "I will not be adding more pages to the pile of literature on the impossibility of interviewing Robert De Niro." He then added, "What follows, for the most part, is an account of how I failed."

Finally, after what has felt like the endless stretch of time that I imagine only First World War soldiers waiting to go over the top can empathise with, but was probably only about 45 minutes, the door to the courtyard opens and there, standing before me, is the deer hunter from *The Deer Hunter*, the raging bull from *Raging Bull*, the good-fella from *Goodfellas*, the godfather from *The Godfather Part II*, the taxi driver from *Taxi Driver*, the one who feels the heat in *Heat*, the guy who said his nipples *cannot* be milked in *Meet The Parents* – one Robert Anthony De Niro Jr.

"Hey. Bob," he says by way of introduction as we shake hands. "How you doin'?"

A note on the attire of Mr De Niro

*De Niro is dressed in loose-fitting cargo shorts and a polo-neck T-shirt, an outfit that somehow manages to give the impression that he's a tourist in his own city, about to ask for directions. You could quite rightly point out he has just come from the airport and this is likely his comfy travelling gear, except that De Niro also arrived at the *GQ* shoot a week earlier in the same outfit. At 76, De Niro clearly dresses for comfort – and doesn't much care what you think about that.*

If there's one subject that De Niro *can* be relied upon to talk freely, it's the current occupant of the White House, a subject on which he has been uncharacteristically verbose these past three years.

That verbosity, though, has made him a target and last October, along with several other high-profile critics of President Trump, De Niro was sent a pipe bomb in the post, even if it was later found that there was no mechanism to set it off.

When we meet in early August, the sender of the bomb – a 57-year-old Trump-supporting ex-pizza delivery man called Cesar Sayoc – had been sentenced to 20 years the previous day.

At his sentencing Sayoc said he was "beyond so very sorry" for his actions.

"He apologised?" asks De Niro when I mention it. "Well, probably for the last time he apologised. I wonder what he'd have said if those bombs had succeeded? If they were set and something did happen, to even one person, he can apologise but it would be too late. But I think all this stuff with Trump and all his shenanigans and nonsense is what is setting the tone for what is going on. We all

You could argue, I say, that Trump has blood on his hands: 'Yeah. I think he does'

know it. It's beyond a disgrace. He's a low-life. He's going to ruin this country."

When it comes to Trump, De Niro talks. Also: he's not finished...

"He's beyond a horrible person. I went on television the day after he was elected and I said, 'I'm willing to give him the benefit of the doubt.' But he's worse than we ever thought he would be."

If De Niro thought that Trump was... Hold on, he's still not done...

"He's an idiot. He's a fool. He's a buffoon. He's silly. He's tacky. He's dangerous. That stupid show *The Apprentice*, people bought it. They buy into it... They created a monster."

The day we meet is also only three days after a gunman killed 22 people in a mass shooting in a busy Walmart in El Paso, Texas. When the 21-year-old suspect was later arrested, law enforcement officials found a racist manifesto on dark website 8chan posted shortly before the massacre, of which they believe he is the writer: wanting to stop an "Hispanic invasion of Texas", he had specifically targeted immigrants. It wasn't hard to draw a line between the suspect's actions and Trump's rhetoric.

You could argue, I say to De Niro, that Trump has blood on his hands.

"Yeah. I think he does. And everyone is realising that now, more and more. It's so preposterous that the NRA has a grip on the Republicans. It's all about money. They're beyond shame. Those [gunmen] are crazy people, but they're inspired by Trump and what he's allowed. It's all subtle but it's all there. He's allowed it. He starts it. He encourages it."

He was a fan, he says, of the response from Beto O'Rourke, formerly the city's representative in congress. "I liked [him] saying, 'Don't come to El Paso!' And Trump got upset. He said, 'Don't fucking come to El Paso! Don't fucking come!' And people have to stand up and say enough is enough now."

Over the years, De Niro has mused about the possibility of a sequel to his 1976 classic *Taxi Driver*, a film that itself was said to have inspired shootings, not least in the case of John Hinckley Jr, who became obsessed with the film and tried to assassinate then US president Ronald Reagan (De Niro's character, disturbed taxi driver Travis Bickle, plots to assassinate a presidential candidate, a storyline that itself was partly based on the diaries of Arthur Bremer, who attempted to assassinate then Alabama governor George Wallace).

Yet watch the film back now and what strikes you is how similar Bickle is to the young men currently carrying out acts of domestic terrorism in America – the lonely, the obsessed, the disenfranchised.

If Travis Bickle was around today, I suggest, surely he'd be one of the deranged Trump supporters currently carrying out one of these racist mass shootings.

"Could be," says De Niro. "Yeah... Could be. Could be."

Is a sequel still on the cards?

"No. We talk about it, me and Marty [Scorsese] and Paul Schrader [the original screenwriter], and Paul took a shot at it, but it just didn't seem to work. It seems in theory that there's something you could come up with that would be interesting, but it just... you know, we'll see. There's no point doing it unless it was special and makes a comment on the times and adds to what that movie was."

It's not just in speaking out that De Niro has become a political target in recent years. By playing former special counsel Robert Mueller on *Saturday Night Live*, he provided liberal America with a tantalising daydream of the straight-backed interrogator – a play on his domineering ex-CIA character from *Meet The Parents* – about to get his man.

His dream sketch to play, he said at the time, would have seen him as Mueller putting Alec Baldwin's Trump in handcuffs and throwing >>

With Joe Pesci
and (below) Jesse
Plemons, Ray Romano
and Al Pacino in
The Irishman

'If all these men have a brand, it's these kinds of movie.
To see a finale is emotional... as any finale is'





ROBERT DE NIRO

‘I never used to think that there was a connection between the mob and Kennedy and the assassination. But maybe there was...’

Coat, £3,300. Polo shirt, £220. Trousers, £680. All by **Armani**. [armani.com](https://www.armani.com). Shoes and socks, De Niro's own.



>> him in jail. It didn't quite work out that way. He's still frustrated, he says now, that Mueller's report was so cloaked in legalese that Trump could declare it a "complete and total exoneration", despite it being nothing of the sort.

The week before we meet, De Niro even wrote an op-ed in the *Washington Post*, in which he bemoaned Mueller's similarly low-key testimony before congress and made some suggestions, as someone used to playing Mueller, regarding how the real Mueller could spice it up a bit (sample sentence: "I may have dropped an f-bomb or two or eight").

"There is a moment in history," he says to me now, "when somebody, especially at [Mueller's] age... when it seems like it would be now to step up and say, 'Two plus two is four.' And say it definitively. Because everybody read it, they picked this out, they picked that out, they said it's there, we've got the morsels of what we need. But it has to have a little oomph." He pauses – one that can only be described as a classic De Niro pause, the kind that stretches off into the distance – and simply adds, "I just wish he'd made more of it."

And while, as I will find, De Niro is much less expansive on other topics, on this, on using his voice to speak out about the 45th incumbent of the White House, all his natural reticence evaporates and anger, as it often does, drives an eloquence that can otherwise elude him.

When asked why he'd played Mueller in the first place, De Niro simply said he had considered it his "civic duty". "Just to be there," he said. "Because Mueller doesn't say much."

A note on the speaking voice of Mr De Niro

De Niro's natural speaking voice is that of Jack Byrnes, his ex-CIA operative patriarch in Meet The Parents, but specifically when Byrnes is directing operations on the phone in a covert whisper. Five minutes into our conversation I am struck by a fear that he is speaking so softly that my dictaphone won't pick it up over a nearby air conditioner and so ask if we can move. While the waiting staff are sent to gather cushions for the new seats, De Niro says he has to make a quick call. He takes a few steps back and conducts a near-silent five-minute phone call, seemingly without taking his eyes off me once. It is the longest five minutes of my life. It is also very Jack Byrnes.

In many ways, *The Irishman* was a fortunate accident, until it seemed to be an unfortunate one. De Niro and Scorsese were all set to make an entirely different film together – *The Winter Of Frankie Machine*, about a retired West Coast assassin – until De Niro happened upon a book called *I Heard You Paint Houses*, which he read as part of his research. >>

>>The book told a remarkable story centred around a deathbed confession that appeared to shed light on the most notorious disappearance in American history: that of the Teamsters union boss Jimmy Hoffa in 1975, whose body was never found.

Frank “The Irishman” Sheeran, a notorious mob hitman and longtime friend of Hoffa, had finally claimed that he was the one who’d pulled the trigger and it was mob boss Russell Bufalino who’d ordered the hit. (The title of the 2004 book comes from the first words Hoffa had said to Sheeran many years before: to paint a house was to kill people, so-called because of the blood splatter on the walls.)

Hoffa was just out of prison after former attorney general Bobby Kennedy had made it his mission in life to take him down and, in turn, clean up the last American institution controlled by organised crime. Yet Hoffa was planning to be president of the union once more. The mob, fearing Hoffa had cut a deal with the Nixon administration – Hoffa had only served four years of a 13-year sentence – couldn’t let that happen.

It was, De Niro saw, much more than a simple cold-case whodunnit; it was the tragic story of two lifelong friends and the ultimate betrayal of that friendship. But more: it was the last act of defiance from a mafia that was on the way out as a genuine force. After this, they’d be low-rent hustlers and small-time drug dealers. In other words, they’d be goodfellas.

De Niro, as he always does, wrote the date he read the book in the inside cover, “And then I said to Marty, we *have* to do this.”

The film virtually cast itself: “I said, ‘Marty, Joe [Pesci] plays Russell [Bufalino]. Al [Pacino] plays Hoffa...’” And De Niro, of course, would play Sheeran.

For a long time, though, they struggled to get it made. The story would span 50 years and begin in earnest when the two first met, in the Fifties, when Sheeran was 37 and Hoffa 44.

“We talked about lots of stuff, you know? Getting younger actors in and so on.”

But nothing stuck and time moved on: “The years just go by. Marty’s doing this, Marty’s doing that.”

They eventually realised it would be possible via the latest CGI techniques, which could digitally de-age the actors in post-production. They ran through a *Goodfellas* scene to test the technology out. But while it solved one problem, it created another: Paramount Pictures, which had been interested in making the film with a budget of around \$100 million (£81m), balked at the increased cost. Eventually, Netflix swooped.

“After that,” says De Niro, “the financing was no longer an issue.”

The budget would eventually balloon to a reported sum of \$159m (£129m), making it the costliest movie of Scorsese’s career. At three-and-a-half hours, it would also be the longest.

The film would have a short, selected theatrical run, in order to satisfy Scorsese and ensure awards-season contention, but, of course, it wouldn’t need to make its money that way. It would instead be a one-film advertising campaign for new Netflix subscribers.

Is De Niro bothered it’ll mostly be watched on TV?

“I’m aware of that,” he says evenly. “What I’m happy about is that we got to make the movie the way we wanted and we got the money to do so.”

Is he a Netflix subscriber?

“No,” he says, before seemingly realising this might not be the most on-message answer for the star for Netflix’s most expensive movie to date. “I mean, maybe I am. But I don’t know. No.”

‘It’s beyond a disgrace. Trump is a low-life. He’s going to ruin this country’

A word from Mr De Niro on who killed JFK

One of the more striking claims in the book on which The Irishman is based is that it was the mob – furious with the war waged against them by President Kennedy and his brother Bobby, the attorney general – who were really behind JFK’s assassination. De Niro’s character, Frank Sheeran, even claimed to have handled the rifles that were given to Lee Harvey Oswald.

“I never used to think that there was a connection between the mob and Kennedy and the assassination,” De Niro agrees when I ask him. “But I started thinking, you know, maybe there was, maybe there was... You know, sometimes those guys like to brag, about this, about that, yada yada. But Frank wasn’t like that. And there are people who think it could have been more connected than we think.”

If it’s technology that powers *The Irishman*, it’s melancholy that drives it. It’s there most obviously in the story itself, the ability to see De Niro and Pacino and Pesci age over so many years and in so many ways: *Boyhood* as done in adulthood.

But it’s also there in the casting. De Niro and Pacino facing off again! But at an age at

which they’d probably be quite glad if the heat was to actually come around the corner as it’s chilly out. De Niro says he was acutely aware it was likely a last hurrah for this particular group of American greats.

“Yeah. I was very happy to get us all together, to have us all together and do probably our last movie together.”

I later speak to Jane Rosenthal, De Niro’s longtime producing partner, who says she cried when she watched the first cut.

“It’s a story about their lives,” she says. “If all of these men have a brand, it’s these kinds of movie and now, to see a finale, is emotional... as any finale is.”

Their faces may start with the CGI sheen of youth, but their bodies, of course, remain the same creaky ones the years had gave them. And the fact the film had languished in development for so long hadn’t helped the disparity. De Niro remembers that on the day they started shooting he looked at the date he’d written in his well-thumbed copy of *I Heard You Paint Houses* and was shocked to realise he’d first read it almost exactly a decade earlier. Or put another way: he was a decade older.

De Niro wasn’t worried about playing the role of a younger man – “I always joke it’s going to extend my career by another 30 years” – but was concerned about moving like one.

A body movement expert – a man called Gary Tacon, who usually works as a stuntman – was even hired to advise them on set.

“He would help us be aware of, say, the difference between bounding down the stairs or just going down the stairs. A younger guy takes two steps at a time. And as you get older, you’re less inclined to. So he’d remind us of that.”

Anything else?

“Yeah. Little things, like being more erect. Just energy, physical energy. Just to be aware when you’re doing a scene not to be as slow as you are at your own age. Small stuff, but it’s important. It adds up.”

I wonder if it was a slightly melancholy experience for him, having someone point out the various ways he now moves like an old man.

“No...” he says, and there’s a pause.

“Life is,” he begins, and pauses again.

“Life is,” he says, and pauses once more.

“Life is what it is.”

A word from Mr De Niro on the time he nearly died while filming *The Deer Hunter*

“It was Chris Walken, me and John Savage on the bridge. The first helicopter comes down. They both got on. I got on. The chopper went up, turned around, over the bridge and finally >>

A full-page photograph of Robert De Niro. He is standing in the center of the frame, leaning against a stack of metal chairs on his left. He is wearing a dark blue, knee-length coat over a light-colored shirt. His hands are clasped in front of him. The background is a dimly lit room with a red 'EXIT' sign on the wall and more stacks of chairs on the right. The floor is made of square tiles.

Coat, £3,300. Shirt, £260.
Trousers, £540. All by
Armani. armani.com.
Shoes, De Niro's own.

‘My father wouldn’t
tell me about himself.
We didn’t talk about
certain things. He wasn’t
that kind of person’

>> I just had to drop when I got close to the water. The second time we did it, Chris got on it, then John and I, and the next thing I know the thing is taking off with the runners caught under the [bridge's] cable. I thought it was going to fall and so we dropped into the water, 20 or 30 feet down, and as I came up out of the water I looked up and saw the helicopter pilot and I thought that was it. But then they lowered it, pulled the cable off and they flew away. After that we said that's it. No more. We got the scene."

De Niro is not quite the obsessive method man he once was. While as a younger actor he famously gained 60 pounds for *Raging Bull* or worked 15-hour days for a month driving a taxi for *Taxi Driver*, he now puts it down to the anxiety he felt at the time. ("When I was young I was anxious and less relaxed about stuff. As I get older I go there and I think, 'It'll be OK. You can get there more easily.'")

I'd once read he also used to think about parts in terms of animals (Travis Bickle, for example, was a crab). Does he still do that? What animal was Frank?

"No, no..." he says and again mentions something about Sheeran's physicality.

"With Frank I was just very concerned about the size, because his size [Sheeran was 6ft 4in] was important to his character. Frank is described in the book as, when he walks, people part to get out of his way. There's just something about him. It's like a steamroller coming. That's the kind of thing I thought of when I thought about him."

In fact, I find, it's pretty impossible to get De Niro to talk about the character – and indeed acting – in any way that isn't physical and practical.

Take the following exchange, for example:

Did you speak to Charles Brandt, the author of *I Heard You Paint Houses*?

"Yeah. I spent a lot of time with Charlie. He was great. He was great."

Was there anything he said about Frank that particularly struck you?

"He was always interesting. [Pause.] He was great. [Pause.] Have you met him?"

I say I haven't.

"Well, talk to him and you'll see. He'll give you a lot of information. He'll give you a lot of detail."

At the time, I found this frustrating. When you're interviewing De Niro, you want to dig into his De Niro-ness. And yet, looking back, I don't know if it's simple reluctance on De Niro's part to talk about anything deeper or simply the fact that when you're a double Oscar winner aged 76, it's the harsh realities – of movement, of size, of age – that simply worry you the most. >>



In Martin Scorsese's Netflix-backed saga, De Niro inhabits the role of mafia hitman Frank Sheeran, who confessed on his deathbed to the murder of union boss Jimmy Hoffa, played by Al Pacino

ROBERT DE NIRO



‘With Frank I was just very concerned about his size. There was something about him, like a steamroller coming’

THE MAKING OF THE IRISHMAN

How Martin Scorsese convinced De Niro, Pacino, Pesci and Netflix to make the most expensive film of his career

At a meeting with Paramount in 2006, Martin Scorsese and Robert De Niro say they want to make *The Irishman* – based on the book *I Heard You Paint Houses* – instead of the already-budgeted hitman thriller *The Winter Of Frankie Machine*. Producer Brad Grey was baffled: “Wait, so you want to take a greenlit film and turn it into a development deal?”

They struggle for funding, so De Niro begins

mentioning the project and cast in interviews: “I don’t usually like to talk about projects, as I always think I’ll jinx it; it’s bad luck,” says De Niro. “But I said to Marty, ‘Let’s put it out there, drum up interest.’”

In January 2013 a taped reading of the script was set up in De Niro’s office, to entice potential investors. “It was extraordinary,” says De Niro’s producing partner Jane Rosenthal. “But I wasn’t sure I’d have them all

[De Niro, Scorsese, Al Pacino, Joe Pesci] together again.”

In August 2015 they run through a *Goodfellas* scene – in which Jimmy “The Gent” Conway (right) dresses down a fellow mobster for lavish spending – to test the CGI technology and de-age De Niro to 46. The results are remarkable.

On 18 September 2017 shooting finally begins. The first scene is between De Niro and Pesci, who had to be coaxed out of retirement and reportedly turned down the role 50 times. “And as Marty will tell you, he’s still saying no today,” says Scorsese’s producer Emma Tillinger Koskoff. “But I actually don’t think it was as difficult as has been made out.”



A note on what makes Mr De Niro Mr De Niro

There are lots of explanations of what makes Robert De Niro so compelling on screen, but almost none of them particularly satisfying – not least the ones De Niro himself gives. The best is this from Martin Scorsese, when he was interviewed by Charlie Rose in 1995.

"Years ago I wasn't able to articulate it. He takes characters that ordinarily are your villains – and in my pictures I like to make them heroes, in a way – and there's something about him that's very compassionate and the audience feels for him. And so there's no character he plays that's irredeemable. They can do anything."

Once you think of De Niro in these terms, it suddenly all makes sense. De Niro's classic characters are almost always antiheroes, yet shuffle through your cinematic memories of De Niro-Scorsese films and you love every single one of them, from abusive boxers (Raging Bull) to vengeful mobsters (Goodfellas) to a mentally unstable taxi driver (guess).

Between the two of them, they almost single-handedly created an alternative cinema of the Seventies that, in an age of virtuous superheroes, has all but died out, but for now, at least, on a streaming platform, survive.

If it's been a while since De Niro has starred in a proper De Niro film – the kind that involves bullets, betrayal and Martin Scorsese – it's not hard to understand why.

In the mid-Nineties, when De Niro had just turned 52, he could still get away with playing an up-and-coming casino boss or a professional thief taking down scores (both *Casino* and *Heat* were released in 1995). But play those same roles in his sixties and seventies? It becomes comedy, not drama.

Which, in a way, is what De Niro embraced, with the likes of *Meet The Parents*, *Analyze This*, *Meet The Fockers*, *Analyze That*, *The Family* and *American Hustle* all in some way having fun with his tough-guy persona.

De Niro himself is the first to admit it's his earlier films he's still best known for, something he most clearly sees in what he's asked to sign.

"I mean, I notice it with the autograph people," he says. "It's a lot of my older movies that they ask me to sign. *Casino*, *Goodfellas*, *Godfather*, *The Deer Hunter*... sometimes the *Meet The Parents* films."

As he continues to work so often – averaging around four films a year, he's essentially the anti-Daniel Day-Lewis – there are

naturally some stinkers. For every *Silver Linings Playbook*, for which he picked up his seventh Oscar nomination, there's a *Dirty Grandpa*, which costarred a nude Zac Efron on a motorbike.

And if you want to bring up *Dirty Grandpa* costarring a nude Zac Efron on a motorbike to Robert De Niro's face, go right ahead. I'm not so stupid. But I do him ask if there are any films that, looking back, with the benefit of hindsight, he wishes he hadn't made.

"That I wish I hadn't done?" he says quickly. "Oh, there are movies I've done that..."

And at this point he pauses, appears to think better of whatever he was about to say and abruptly changes tact.

"I did them," he says finally. "And, look, any



With director Martin Scorsese on the set of their ninth feature film together, *The Irishman*

movie I did, I did. And I take full responsibility for it."

And yet, rewatch – or indeed just watch – some of those comedies, especially the ones that don't cast him as an ageing tough guy, and you start to notice something telling. They're... not as terrible as you suspect. Often, they're surprisingly thoughtful. And sweetly sad.

Granted, films such as *The Intern* (in which De Niro plays Anne Hathaway's intern) and *Last Vegas* (in which De Niro, Michael Douglas, Morgan Freeman and Kevin Kline go on one last stag do in Vegas) were never going to see De Niro carried on the Academy's shoulders to get his third Oscar engraved.

But in an era of creaking action heroes

breaking out the Botox for one last job, they tackle the realities of ageing – the invisibility of it, the drip-drip indignities of it – in a way that so-called serious films rarely touch.

De Niro's late-career comedies don't just show a lack of vanity in having fun with his own legacy, but a lack of vanity in his own ageing too. After all, *The Irishman*'s technology may start off by de-ageing him to his thirties, but it'll end, with Frank Sheeran's confession, in his early eighties, by ageing him to his death.

This lack of vanity is no better illustrated than when I ask the question I'd been most nervous about asking. Specifically: why on earth were you in that advert for supermarket bagels?

I phrase it slightly more delicately – "The Warburtons advert," I begin, "Can I ask you how that..." – but before I can finish he lets out the biggest, happiest guffaw in the hour we spend together, his face bunching in that oh-so-De Niro way.

I say that people were a little surprised to see Robert De Niro flogging baked goods.

"I know! I know!" he says still laughing. "Look, they asked me to do it and I met the guy, Warburton, and I thought it was funny. I saw [Sylvester] Stallone do it and I thought at least he has a sense of humour about it and about himself. And I thought I can look at it two ways. Should I think I should never have done that? I'm too good for that or something? And I said, fuck it, I'll do it. Why not? Don't hold it against me."

Fuck it. He'll do it. Why not? Don't hold it against him.

A note on calling Mr De Niro 'Bob'

On almost any talk show, if an actor sitting on the couch has worked with Mr De Niro, the question will inevitably arise on how one addresses him.

"Are you allowed to call him Bob?" is the question they're usually asked, suggesting that "Bob" is only for the special few, with Mr De Niro the correct moniker for the rest of us, in the way one knows to address the Queen as Her Majesty. To this I can only report that everyone at his production company calls him Bob, and, without incident, so do I.

When De Niro turned 70, he realised that of his six children and four grandchildren, only the two eldest – his son Raphael, 43, and daughter Drena, 48 – had known their paternal grandfather, Robert De Niro Sr, when he was alive.

De Niro's parents were both artists and had met at painting classes. They married,

ROBERT DE NIRO

but separated when De Niro was just two, after his father announced he was gay. De Niro was raised by his mother in the Greenwich Village and Little Italy areas of Manhattan. His father always lived within walking distance.

And while his father had died some 20 years earlier at this point, De Niro had kept his art studio in SoHo exactly as his father had left it: the walls covered with his paintings and drawing and posters of his own exhibitions, the shelves stacked with his books and tapes.

After early promise, De Niro Sr's career had not been a success. And so, De Niro Jr felt, he would soon be forgotten. He felt a need to preserve his father's life in some way. The eventual documentary – *Remembering The Artist: Robert De Niro Sr* – aired on HBO in 2014.

"I wanted to do the documentary for my kids," says De Niro now. "And for my grandkids, so they would know who he was. I had kept his studio and have some Super 8 film. And so I thought I really have to do it before it's too late, while his contemporaries and so on were still alive."

He still has the studio, still untouched, and still visits: a physical connection with his past. "I always have people go over once in a while. It's a nice... It's SoHo, but when he had it, when I was a kid, it [SoHo] was not as tidy as it is now. It was a mess! It was a dump. It was trucks and bakeries and all kinds of industrial stuff."

As part of the documentary De Niro read some of his father's diaries, but has more still to read that he's been putting off. Is he apprehensive about reading them?

"Yeah. You know, that's probably the way I'm feeling. But I will within the next two years. I'll have to."

When I ask what struck him about the diaries he did read, he starts to answer a couple of times, before eventually answering a question I didn't ask: what his relationship with his father was like.

"He wouldn't tell me things about himself. We didn't talk about certain things. Sometimes he would expound about something, here and there, but he wasn't... he wasn't that kind of a person."

He pauses.

"We didn't have one discussion as father and son discussing art or anything like that. But probably a lot of fathers and sons don't do that. We wish that they would and those are the regrets."

It's a problem, he admits, he sometimes has with his own children. They find it hard to talk.

"You know," he says, laughing, "I was just

with one of my kids. They don't want to ask you certain things. They don't want to be bothered. They know possibly they should, but they don't, and it's uncomfortable, you know, and that's how I was with my father. My dad would say, 'Why don't you do this and why don't you do that? Why don't you read Baudelaire?' I don't know! If I was smart I should have said, 'If you're reading this, I should read it too.' But I wasn't."

Before our time is up, I mention to De Niro that of all the films I rewatched in preparation for the interview, the one that struck me the most wasn't actually one of his classics – those films so part of the culture you almost know them line by line – but a mostly forgotten 2001 heist thriller called *The Score*, in which he starred opposite Marlon Brando, the man he'd always admired as a young actor and whose *Godfather* character De Niro would of course play as a younger man in *The Godfather Part II*, earning him his first Oscar.

Brando is huge and pale in the film, walking unsteadily with a cane and clearly unwell.

'You ask kids about [Marlon Brando]. Some know. But nothing lasts forever'

The film's director, Frank Oz, has previously spoken about what a difficult shoot it was and so De Niro, for the first time, starts to tell me his version. He still speaks quietly, but on the subject of Brando he speaks more freely and fluently than on almost any other topic.

Oz had asked De Niro about casting Brando, he says, knowing all about his difficult reputation.

"And I said, you know, 'We all love Brando. I'm fine. He'll be what he'll be. He's going to do whatever he's going to do.'" As in, he wouldn't read the script. "He came in and said what he wanted and we just reacted to whatever it was. But he didn't like Frank Oz. He had a problem with certain people, authority figures, directors. It's not the first time I heard about it. I remember once Brando came in and he got upset about something and yelled at Frank. And then he came back with his cane and said, you know, 'Sorry, everybody.' But you feel embarrassed. It was like a kid watching your parents have a fight."

It soon got so bad, De Niro says, that Brando eventually refused to be directed

by Oz and would only be directed by De Niro himself.

De Niro remembers one scene in an empty indoor swimming pool. He was directing but Oz had set up a video feed two blocks away in a camper van to monitor everything.

"I don't know if he [Brando] was aware of that. But every time I did a take I'd walk up there and say, 'Any notes?' But I remember, the next morning, I had a few of my kids with me, I had my dog and [I was] driving to set and they're jumping around and I thought, 'My God, I haven't felt this way since I was a young actor having to learn a bunch of lines.' You're totally unprepared. You feel like you're going crazy."

He remembers the final scene he had to direct – Brando's character's death.

"He was in his bed. And they just asked me if he would smile, a little smile before he dies. And I was saying, 'Marlon, please, just for me, a little smile, just one take. And he was saying, 'I can't do it. I just can't. I just can't do it.' And I said, 'Guys, that's as far as I can go.' It's our last day and our last scene together. I don't know what they got."

I point out he's the same age now as Brando was then.

"Yeah, he was 75 [at the time of shooting]. And he died when he was 80. It was five years later."

He remembers, he says, because he was shooting *Meet The Fockers* at the time.

"I went to his memorial and I hadn't seen him all that time and there was a picture of him in the wheelchair and he was so thin. I felt bad for Marlon. He gained all this weight and he wanted to lose it. He just couldn't, you know. And then he lost it when he got sick, obviously..."

De Niro's speaking voice is always soft, but now it really is a whisper.

"He was so great. Actors of my generation all loved him. He was so smart. But then you ask kids today in terms of those actors... Some know. Some don't. And nothing, nothing lasts forever." **GQ**

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THE IRISHMAN IS IN SELECTED CINEMAS FROM 8 NOVEMBER AND ON NETFLIX FROM 27 NOVEMBER.

THE VIRTUOUSO

Tameem Antoniades is the Afghan-born coder, and son of a Cypriot assassin, who set up shop in a bedroom, rewrote the rules of indie gaming and overnight became very, very rich. Naturally, his reality is likely different from yours, but with the radical new technology behind his virtual reality, he's about to reshape yet another facet of his craft and change the way you think... literally



London-based video game designer
Tameem Antoniades and friends...



Story by **Charlie Burton** Photographs by **David Vintiner**

Tameem Antoniades is driving nervously. We're on the motorway from Cambridge to London in his brand-new Lamborghini Aventador SVJ, the same model that broke the record for fastest production car lap at the Nürburgring last year and which costs £350,000.

He took receipt of it four days ago in Cambridge, where his games studio, Ninja Theory, is based and had been fretting about the prospect of owning it; he had never driven a supercar before and wasn't sure if he'd be able to handle it. In fact, he never planned on buying it in the first place.

He had been on holiday in Bologna with friends and one of their group suggested they take a look around the Lamborghini factory. Afterwards, they went to a restaurant around the corner. They got drunk. In the white heat of their revelry, a friend convinced him it was a good idea to put in an order for the latest model. "I didn't even look at how much it cost," recalls Antoniades. His friends filmed him making the call.

The next day, he wondered what on earth he had done. He went straight back to the showroom and demanded to cancel it. An hour later, well, not only had he been persuaded otherwise, but he had chosen all the options and even agreed to go on holiday to Italy with the dealer for a Lamborghini event.

Such is life when you're figuring out how to be wealthy. Antoniades recently came into a great deal of money – he won't disclose the exact figure – after selling his company to Microsoft. Today, sitting at the wheel of his new car, dressed entirely in black – as he always is – the 45-year-old explains he has found the aftermath a steep learning curve. Firstly, there was the sheer practicality of where to put all that cash. "I spoke to loads of banks, but a lot of them felt like car salesmen," he says. "A lot of my friends asked me to invest in their harebrained ideas, and I didn't want to do that, and then they got angry about it. I started to feel very unstable." And then there were the more existential questions. "What do I do with my life? Like,

how do I remain useful?" His response was to throw himself back into work – not simply to make several more video games, but also to do something world-changing, in the manner of Steve Jobs. After all, his studio's recent release, *Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice*, was so inventive that it won five Baftas, took motion capture to the next level and ultimately culminated in the deal with Microsoft.

"I have this inner arrogance that I can achieve anything I put my mind to. I don't know where it comes from. However difficult it is, however long it takes, I can achieve it. I recognise that it's sort of delusional, but it's only a delusion if it doesn't become real." In recent months, he has channelled that confidence into a plan of considerable ambition. He hopes it will result in two projects that could change the world.

The first is called the Insight Project and it aims to break new ground in mental health. Earlier, back at Ninja Theory's Cambridge studio, Antoniades revealed an embryonic work in progress: a virtual-reality version of a London flat. "The idea is to get as close to reality as possible, to create an environment that works the same way a real environment works and looks utterly, utterly real." To do this, the team is in the process of painstakingly scanning real-world objects into this virtual apartment and then improving the

'What we can do, that I think no else can, is make the virtual character interactive'

tinest details. The layout of the flat is based on Antoniades' own apartment – he reasons that if it's a space he knows intimately then he will better be able to judge whether the team has managed to perfect it. Into this cyber realm they are going to place a character that they intend to be the most realistic virtual human ever made, from skin to eyes to clothing. "It's one area where I think we are world leaders," he says.

Antoniades, who is tall and has an asymmetric haircut straight out of a video game, is a maestro at creating virtual worlds, but says that he is less at home in the real one. He describes himself as slightly autistic and although he hasn't been officially diagnosed, he did try an autism test on an app made by Channel 4. For social interaction, he scored zero out of 20. "I definitely have those traits of deep focus, of not understanding how social interaction and groups work – I've just not been interested in that side of the world." It is strange to hear him say this, as he comes across as confident and affable, but he is convinced he has room for improvement. He looks on these challenges less as shortcomings as puzzles to crack. And having money, in a funny way, has made the puzzles harder. Take relationships. "I'm single. That's another problem to solve. The thing is, I can't go out with anyone now without them knowing I'm wealthy, so then the question becomes, 'Oh, do they like me for me or do they like me for the fact that I'm wealthy?'"

When it comes to his new project, however, he talks with much more certainty. In three years, Antoniades believes, they will be at a stage where their virtual apartment set-up is indistinguishable from film – and a user can step into it by donning a virtual-reality headset and exploring using only voice and gestures. "The thing we can do, that I think no else can credibly do, is make the virtual character interactive, make them actually respond to you, respond to your gaze, your actions." It's costing them millions – but what has it got to do with mental health?

The virtual character becomes your guide through this environment – a kind of proxy therapist. You, in turn, are wearing kit that captures biometric data, such as heart rate and eye movements. This allows the computer to represent your inner state – anxiety, say, or dread – in the virtual world. Perhaps it might be represented as an enemy. You then attempt to vanquish or appease this character using only your mind. In other words, you learn to overcome that undesirable mental state. That skill can in turn be used in the real world when you feel that state of mind coming on – or perhaps are alerted to it by a wearable device, such as a haptic wristband. There would also be a benefit to clinicians. The hope is >>

Tameem Antoniades
photographed for
British GQ at his
home in London,
20 August



‘I have this arrogance that I can achieve anything, however difficult.
I recognise it’s sort of delusional, but only if it doesn’t become real’

>> that as more and more people go through the experience, it will help define a whole host of inner states in terms of their physical signatures. Psychiatrists could then use those signatures to diagnose more accurately what patients are feeling inside. Ninja Theory is collaborating on the project with Paul Fletcher, a psychiatrist and professor of health neuroscience at Cambridge University. Fletcher is calling it a “new kind of clinical science”.

The experience will also be given a game-like sense of progression. The team is still working out what form this will take, but Fletcher says that this is vital. “If a self-help book says that in order to [solve a mental health problem] you’ve got to train yourself, and it’s probably going to take a couple of hours a day, a lot of people will put the book down after a week. Whereas if you give someone a game and say, ‘You’re allowed two hours a day on this,’ they’ll say, ‘Well, can’t I have more?’ It’s an amazing training setting.”

To be effective, the virtual environment has to be wholly convincing, which is why a games company such as Ninja Theory, says Antoniades, is in prime position to deliver this new tool. Not only does the company have experience in creating virtual avatars, human-computer interfaces and data analytics tools, but what they’re building could also be repurposed for a game in the more traditional sense. That means they can justify investing heavily in it. “We can spend millions of pounds on it and create the best assets, beyond anything researchers have ever seen,” says Antoniades.

As the project moves through prototypes, Antoniades and Fletcher will verify their results through experiments and make them available via established scientific channels. It will join a number of other recent VR-based projects designed for psychotherapy, such as the US Department Of Defense-funded Bravemind system for helping soldiers with PTSD.

Simultaneously, Antoniades will also be getting underway on a separate but connected project, drawing on hyper-realistic VR worlds and characters for a further enterprise. He is calling it Project Dreadnought and he hopes it will result in the last new entertainment medium.

Antoniades had an anxious childhood. He was born in Afghanistan and moved to London with his mother at the age of two, when she decided to flee his birth father. He lived there until the age of six, at which point she had met his stepfather, Andreas Antoniades, a Greek-Cypriot former assassin turned Customs And Excise informer. He was recruited by the British in the Fifties to inform on Eoka, which fought

a guerrilla campaign against British rule in Cyprus. Andreas subsequently became one of three leading moles inside the gangs bringing billions of pounds of heroin into the UK. His underworld lifestyle meant that the family occasionally had to move countries: Paris for a couple of years, Barcelona for six. With some frequency, Andreas would wind up in various prisons, at least until his handlers got him out; at one stage the then-foreign secretary Jack Straw had to intervene to free him from jail in Germany. Along the way, Tameem’s mother got caught up in her husband’s affairs and also went to prison herself. “My parents were absent for months, if not years, at a time at various points,” he says. “Once a family member sat me down and said, ‘Look, your parents are not coming back. You’re going to have to go up for adoption.’” In the end, that didn’t happen, because both his parents were released from prison.

He got through it all thanks to what he describes as his Spock-like ability to bury his emotions. “My parents would call me ‘The Robot’ because I was focused on things

‘We had Disney executives wanting to visit and we couldn’t run the game’

that I would make. I wanted to be an inventor.” In particular, he wanted to make video games. In France, he had been introduced to them; in Spain he had become obsessed with them. When his parents would go out gambling, they would give him and his brother a bag of money and they would spend up to eight hours playing games in the arcades. He developed quite a talent. The inflection point, however, came at the age of 13. He got a Commodore 64 and learned how to programme games himself.

Having returned to the UK, he went to A-level college in North London and fared terribly, then did computer science at Queen Mary University. “I was really lazy. I barely scraped through.” Despite his poor grades, his programming abilities landed him a job at Millennium Interactive, a games studio in Cambridge that would later be acquired by Sony.

While working as a coder, he harboured aspirations to design games and decided to pitch an idea. The Sony marketing machine in London liked it and asked him to get it off the ground, much to the chagrin of the studio’s career design directors, who were having their own pitches rejected. Then a new boss

came in and canned the project. “I thought, ‘OK, I’m only in this business because I want to make stuff and other people are stopping me from making stuff. So the only solution is to set up my own company so that no one can tell me not to.’”

He quit Sony and in March 2000, with two Sony colleagues, Nina Kristensen and Mike Ball, started a company called Just Add Monsters. They had £3,000 and were working out of a bedroom. Yet the games they had been working on at Sony were sufficiently well regarded that the world came knocking. “We had Disney executives wanting to visit this bedroom and we didn’t have computers that could run a game. It was a joke. We would try to meet somewhere else because it was really embarrassing.”

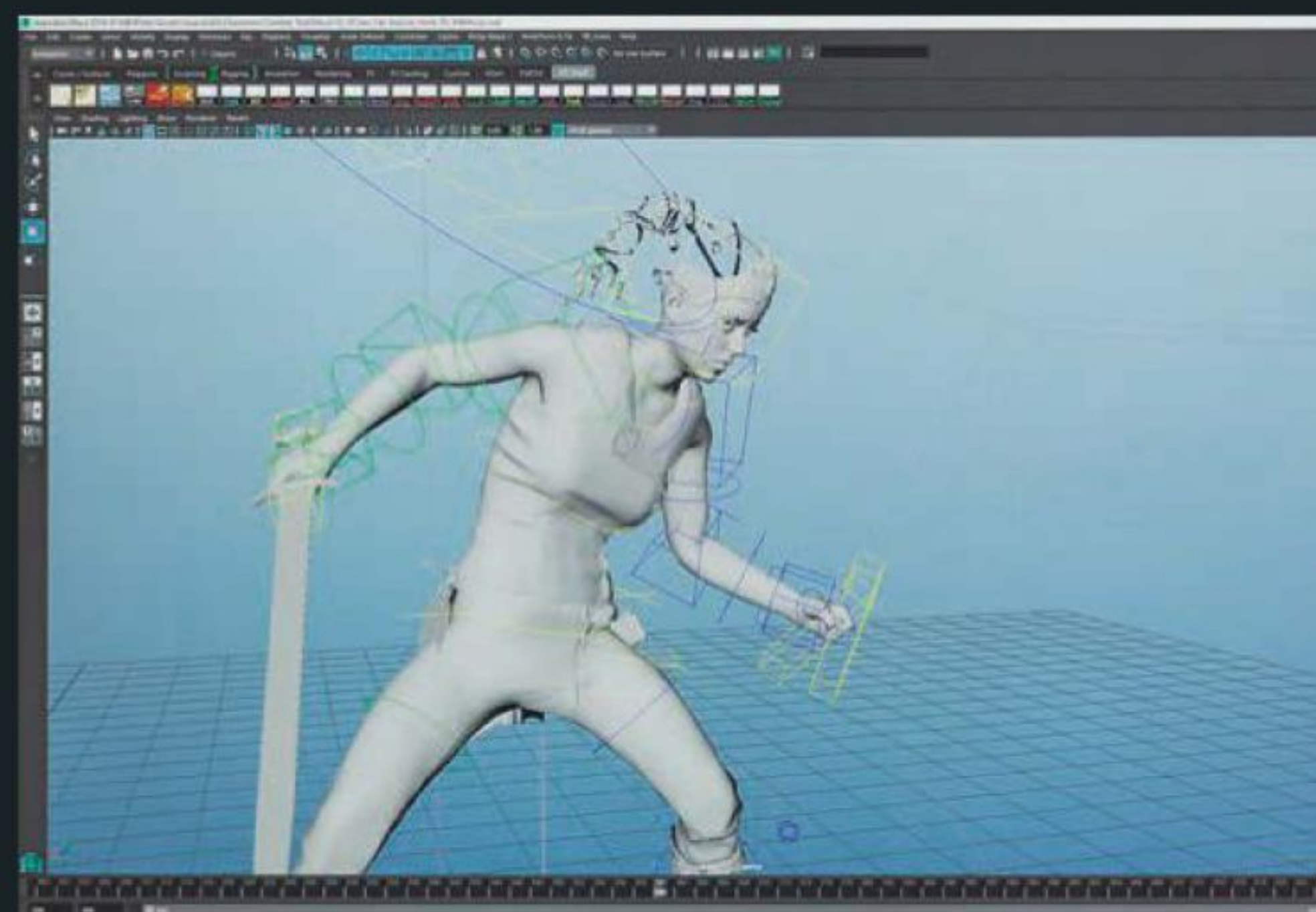
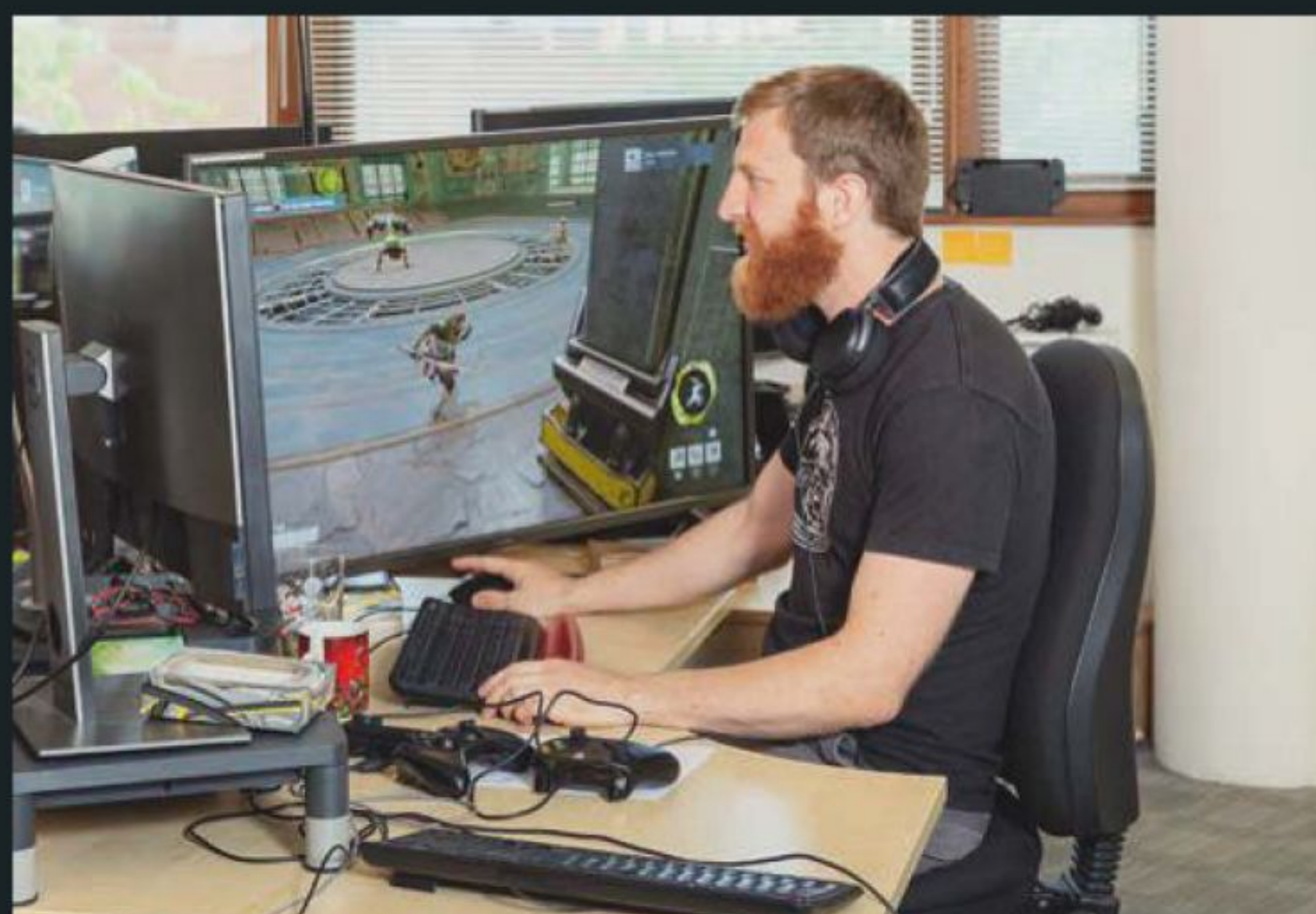
What followed was a tale of survival. Just Add Monsters was bought by Argonaut Games and made a beat ‘em up called *Kung Fu Chaos* (2003) for Microsoft. Things were looking up. But then Argonaut went bust and the trio were forced to remortgage their houses to start a new company, Ninja Theory, with Antoniades continuing to lead the design department.

The company’s next title, *Heavenly Sword*, turned Sony’s head, saving Ninja Theory from bankruptcy. “But it was a really terrible deal we signed. They knew we had just founded. They knew we were cash poor and we had to sign away everything – the technology, the IP – and we had to work with them exclusively.” It was the kind of big production Antoniades had wished for – Andy Serkis directed and provided motion-captured performances – but, despite warm reviews when it came out in 2007, the game was ultimately unprofitable. The games they made after that also struggled to find any kind of commercial success. The founders split the company into smaller teams to take on multiple projects – work for hire, indie games, mobile games – just to survive. “I was pretty much ready to give up, but I thought I’d give it one more stab. So I took a small team aside and made *Hellblade*.”

Hellblade was different. Not just as a game but as a business model. Strapped for cash but full of ambition, they had to find a way to punch above their weight.

Here’s how the games industry traditionally works. A publisher either develops a game internally or signs an external developer, much like a book publisher signs a writer. That developer is then given an advance, creates the game and then earns off the advance through royalties. Once the advance is paid off – plus other agreed costs – the developer receives the royalties themselves. Usually a game retails for around £50 and the royalty >>

VIRTUAL REALITY



Tameem Antoniades' Cambridge HQ operates on his principle of 'independent AAA', making financially successful, Bafta-winning games with the focus of smaller developers; (left) the Insight Project seeks to deploy leading VR technology as a mental health therapy

>> will typically be around £2 or £3 per unit. For the developer to see any of those royalties themselves, therefore, requires selling millions of units. Take Ninja Theory's title *DmC: Devil May Cry* (2013): it was critically lauded and a multimillion seller, but the royalties that Ninja Theory received were not enough to ensure its survival. So, for *Hellblade*, Antoniades came up with a new approach. He called it "independent AAA". In his words, it is about creating, funding and owning a game of "AAA", or blockbuster, quality but with the more focused design, lower price point and open development process that defines indie games. This translated into a title that was around eight hours long, about half the running time of a AAA game, with a price of only £25, from which Ninja Theory would receive £19 per unit. It was made with just 20 people over three years and the development budget was £8m, including marketing. When you consider that AAA games are made with £20m to £100m and up, they were doing it on a shoestring.

What they created, however, was groundbreaking. The idea came from Antoniades' reaction to a friend who had a psychotic episode. She was hearing voices, she was seeing things and it left Antoniades perturbed because he couldn't understand what she was describing. He started reading about it. "I remember being in my bed reading about this stuff. And then I remember feeling very afraid. I started to feel like I could see shadows and I had a heightened sense of anxiety. And I thought, 'Wow, this is really powerful. Just reading about this stuff is making me afraid. We could do that in the game.' And then I told the team, quite excitedly, 'Why don't we do this about psychosis, about mental health?'" The team was rather less excited. What if people said they had misrepresented or trivialised the condition? It could be a media firestorm.

Antoniades was resolute. He decided to get a specialist on board and enticed Professor Fletcher to join the project. They also assembled groups of patients with lived experience of psychosis, who gave them feedback throughout the development process on

what they were getting right and what they were getting wrong. For instance, initially the main character, Senua, a Pict warrior on a quest to rescue her dead lover's soul, would hear a good voice and an evil voice. That's not right at all, the patients said – different characters should move in and out of a ceaseless chatter. Ninja Theory committed to giving those patients final approval on whether the game was ready before they released it.

The budgetary constraints of the production meant that Ninja Theory was forced to innovate. For the motion capture, the process by which the movements of real people are used to animate the characters in the game, the

character, it was a culmination of all of these people's input, their life experiences. That was just sad."

The team braced itself for how the game would be received. While some critics had reservations, the depiction of psychosis was generally celebrated in the press and, more importantly, by people with mental illness and their families. The studio received hundreds of messages. "I've never seen a poem, book, song or game that depicted mental health so well," read one. "It fills me with warmth to know that I am not alone. I hope those around me, and my own partner, can now understand how real the darkness can be. Thank you for this gift."

The Royal College Of Psychiatrists recognised it with an award and Antoniades and Professor Fletcher were invited to talk about their work at the Houses Of Parliament, Ten Downing Street and Kensington Palace, as well as several science conferences. It became profitable after generating more than £10m in revenue from 500,000 sales in three months, vindicating the independent AAA model. At the 2018 Baftas, the game was nominated for nine awards and won five – one of them was in the category of "Game Beyond Entertainment".

Shortly after, Antoniades was woken up by a phone call from his business partner Nina Kristensen. "I have just got off the phone with Microsoft," she said. "Would you be interested in selling the company?"

"No," said Antoniades.

"Are you sure?" said Kristensen.

"I guess," Antoniades replied, "there's a price..."

The head of Microsoft Games flew to Cambridge to meet the pair for dinner. Antoniades had been at a punk concert in Paris.

"It was a proper one with stage diving and doing things I probably shouldn't be doing at my age. No, fuck that, *should* be doing." The plane back to Cambridge was late, so he had to go straight from the airport to the meeting, wearing punk clothes, nail varnish and eyeliner and set about negotiating the deal.

Having found success through the independent AAA model, the team was initially nervous about the idea of selling to the Microsoft juggernaut. "We've been fighting



University Of Cambridge psychiatrist Professor Paul Fletcher works with Antoniades on the Insight Project, calling it a 'new kind of clinical science'

studio collaborated with Epic Games to come up with a new technique called "real-time cinematography", allowing them to reduce the whole process of producing a motion captured sequence from weeks to minutes.

For Antoniades, the project took a toll. When it came out, he was in tears, bedridden, for days. "I suppressed all emotion during the making of the game. It had felt like such an exhausting project to work on. But also it really hit home that it wasn't just Senua, the

'Project Dreadnought is going to redefine what entertainment, or even reality, is. It will be a new medium, probably the last new medium'

for independence all our lives," he says, "but what I eventually understood was that [Microsoft] wanted us to remain independent as a creative studio and make anything we want." The deal was done. Suddenly, Antoniades was extraordinarily wealthy.

The Lamborghini pulls into the underground car park at the 36-storey City Of London skyscraper that Antoniades calls home. We take the lift up to the penthouse. At 6,000 square feet and set over two floors, it is, says Antoniades, the biggest in the City. It has a fitness room, a home cinema, a room with a retractable roof that turns into an indoor-outdoor patio and was listed for just over £9m. You might assume that the owner of such a place would be a committed materialist. In fact, Antoniades owns so few things that, beyond his clothes (all bought from the cult Berlin menswear store Darklands), he moved in with only a rucksack. He lives among the show-home furnishings and says that he likes the flat less for its luxury than its function.

In order for the Insight Project to gain teeth and have a meaningful impact, he believes he needs to raise his profile and tap into influential networks in worlds beyond gaming. He couldn't do that from Cambridge, so he needed a foothold in London. The flat, he says, is a platform. "I can host dinners and people [see the flat and] understand that I've made something of my life, so I'm not an idiot – not that you have to prove it in that way, but people understand that on a basic level." Sitting in a chair by one of the huge living room windows, looking over the city laid out like a model railway below, he explains that for all his new ideas he has found his new life as a wealthy man to be discombobulating. When he moved into the flat last winter, there was no internet and the home entertainment system didn't work. He felt isolated, both geographically and emotionally. "I felt very insecure and didn't want to tell anyone that I'd become wealthy. And then, on the work side, we stopped doing all our work-for-hire projects. So I had to come up with new projects for the whole of the team from scratch and organise that. So work became very anxious and unstable as well and that made me quite paranoid and

quite depressed." Throw in the new property and things soon became overwhelming.

That all changed chiefly thanks to a stroke of luck. A friend of the person who sold him the apartment was able to offer financial advice and introduced him to a social circle of people who had also risen to the top of their industries, from art and music to finance and pharma. "I've met people in positions that dwarf mine and they are having a good, productive and happy life, so it can be done. I can ask them for advice and they'll give it to me." Take his relationship conundrum. One of his new wealthy friends counselled that he shouldn't worry about

experience. Perhaps you could be Jason searching for the legendary Golden Fleece or a soldier landing on the beaches of Normandy. As with the Insight Project, it will be indistinguishable from real life and, unlike current VR, will contain virtual humans that participate in the experience and respond to you in a meaningful way – like being in *The Matrix*. "It is going to redefine what entertainment, or even reality, is," he says. "It will be a new medium, probably the last new medium, because you can't get any closer to reality." *Hellblade*, the Insight Project, everything that Ninja Theory is working on, they are all test beds for Project Dreadnought. "I'll do that, then I'll probably quit."

As the evening draws in, Antoniades gazes over London and reflects on what motivates him in his new efforts. He recalls one of his best friends, Peter de Bourcier, who cofounded play.com, cashed out and was diagnosed with cancer soon after. Before de Bourcier died, he invited all of his friends, one by one, to chat and say goodbye. Antoniades went to see him. They got drunk and discussed how ridiculous it is that humans fear death when we're all going to die. Instead, they agreed, the real fear should be not making the best use of one's time. That impulse is why, for Antoniades, the next step in his life can't simply be more games.

"Whether I [succeed] or not is irrelevant. If I don't make it, no one will care. Just like nobody cares about whether you and I exist right now. So that sense of failure is transitory. But the knowledge gained in trying could be enough for either us to succeed or for someone else to. And so then it becomes worthwhile," he says. "I just have this

fear that if I don't try to do that, what am I going to do?" **GQ**



Antoniades, who dresses in clothes from cult Berlin menswear store Darklands, sold his company to Microsoft in 2018 for an undisclosed sum

whether would-be partners like him for his money. "That's just who you are now," they advised him. "Just don't get married." He hopes when the time is right this new group of friends may also be able to help with the Insight Project – and also a scheme of even loftier intent, his entertainment-focused Project Dreadnought. It's named after the British battleship that launched in 1906 that was so technologically advanced it made other naval vessels redundant.

Antoniades believes his Dreadnought will be equally revolutionary. He wants to create virtual worlds that the user can step into using a headset and have an extraordinary

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DAN BILZERIAN

DOUCHEBAG INC: Dan Bilzerian's
**BILLION-DOLLAR
CANNABIS PLAN**

Having ditched the poker ('It's worse than a drug addiction'), the guns ('The government has taken a stance') and the women ('They're using me') the Instagram megastar and man of mysterious means is making a bid for respectability with his own CBD company. But is it all just smoke and mirrors? We sidestepped the NDA and slipped inside his \$100 million Bel Air mansion to find out

Story by **Chris Ayers** Photographs by **Julian Berman**



'I'm a military
veteran, I was a
cop, and I can't
own a gun?
That's absurd.
For smoking
a plant!'

Dan Bilzerian, photographed in
Los Angeles for British GQ

It's early afternoon in the hills of Bel Air, California – or just before breakfast, international playboy time (IPT) – and my interview with Instagram king, ultra-stakes poker player, gun collector, womaniser, bodybuilder and now wannabe cannabis multibillionaire Dan Bilzerian is not, it's fair to say, going brilliantly.

And by not going brilliantly, I mean the interview theoretically began ten minutes ago but I have yet to make it beyond the security booth at the foot of his driveway, where a polite young man with an iPad insists that I sign a “nondisclosure agreement” before going any farther.

This seems like a simple misunderstanding – I'm here to conduct a magazine interview, after all – so I'm less taken aback by the hold-up than I am by the spectacle of Bilzerian's abode.

Picture a whole mountain with a Heathrow-sized international arrivals hall on top of it and you've got the idea. Only it's bigger and flashier than that. The internet informs me that the newly built property was originally listed for sale at \$100 million (£80m) or to rent for a much more reasonable \$350,000 (£280,000) a month. Amenities include 12 bedrooms, 23 bathrooms, five bars, a putting green with a “50-foot fire feature” and a 14-car garage with viewing turntables.

It is precisely such oligarch-grade extravagance that has turned Bilzerian into a social media phenomenon, of course – along with the barely dressed females with whom he surrounds himself, his penchant for extreme weaponry and stunts that once saw him arrested on two felony bomb-making charges. (His lawyers got these downgraded to a no-contest misdemeanor plea.)

And that's before we get to the backstory of Bilzerian's notorious Eighties corporate-raider father – who went to prison twice then exiled himself to the West Indies, where he avoided paying a \$62m (£49m) fine – or the Instagram star's involvement in the notorious Hollywood poker scandal that ensnared Ben Affleck and Tobey Maguire and inspired the film *Molly's Game*. Or indeed the fact that Bilzerian also managed to find himself on stage at the Route 91 Harvest country music festival in Las Vegas when Stephen Paddock opened fire on the crowd from his suite on the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay hotel, killing 58 people.

In another era, a convention-flouting lunatic such as Bilzerian would have been a Hunter S Thompson-style outcast, tormenting all God-fearing folk from the fringes of society.

But this is 2019, when the lunatics have not only taken over the asylum, but convinced >>



‘It’s National Women’s Day. Be thankful. They are good for so many things!’

DAN BILZERIAN



'Some are staying here. Some I'm dating. It's a mix,' says Bilzerian of the 38 women expected to visit the day after his GQ interview

>> us all to live in it – while paying them with “likes”. Bilzerian has more than 40m followers across all social media platforms, a greater reach than many major US television networks.

Back at Bilzerian’s security post, the guard is showing no inclination towards letting me in. All first-time visitors must sign the non-disclosure agreement, he explains. I point out that my job today, the very purpose of a magazine interview, is to disclose. Would Bilzerian ask a plumber to sign a non-plumbing agreement before letting him in to unblock a drain?

I’m told to reverse my car into a waiting area. A lawyer will be summoned. She’s coming from Century City, 20 minutes away.

Time passes. I switch off the engine and open the windows to better admire the homes of Bilzerian’s closest neighbours, who include Tesla’s Elon Musk. Several lurid-hued sports cars come and go. I wait some more. Finally, a publicity man emerges to apologise for the misunderstanding. Everyone else signs the contract, he explains, in a helpful tone.

At last, I’m informed that “Dan” would like to speak to me about the situation in person. As the massive double-driveway gates open, I steer my car up the mountain-side to the 70-car motor court above. There must be about £5m worth of exotic metal up here, I marvel. Bilzerian’s chrome 427 Shelby Cobra alone – 1965 vintage – is worth £1.5m.

As for the man himself, he’s an unmissable, albeit compact, presence.

Navy Seal beard. Luminous athleisurewear. Humongous white (platform?) trainers. His legs are most striking – as though two towers of pebbles have been shrink-wrapped in brown Cellophane. You could count the man’s fat cells on one hand.

I get out of the car and find myself shaking hands with him on a black outdoor rug emblazoned with a gigantic goat logo. (It’s Bilzerian’s pet goat, Zeus, who lives at his other home, in Las Vegas, with his three-legged rescue cat, Smushball.)

Bilzerian is relaxed, confident but not cocky, surprisingly warm. Thankfully, he also doesn’t appear to be armed. He explains that the contract is no big deal. I just have to sign it. I apologise for not signing it, but reiterate that I’m really not going to sign it. Phone calls are made. I make an excruciating attempt at small talk by asking Bilzerian if he’s renting – but he informs me that he signed his own NDA with the developer of the property so he couldn’t possibly comment. (See? Everyone signs them. Totally normal, man.)

With that, Bilzerian exits and I’m left with the person I assume is his lawyer. After some more back and forth, during which it becomes clear that neither of us is going to back down,

I finally lose my patience and get back in the car – although my curiosity about Bilzerian is such that I waver, wondering if I should just sign the bloody thing and be done with it. But no. Although I’m all in favour of new experiences, entering into a legally binding contract with Dan Bilzerian isn’t one of them. The interview’s a bust.

On the way home, a colleague – female, early twenties, American – sends me a link to a song by the rapper T-Pain. The song is entitled “Dan Bilzerian”. It was her college anthem, she says. I play it on Spotify as I drive. “Bitch, I’m rich as fuck / Bitch, I’m rich as fuck,” goes the feel-good refrain.

Back in the office, I feel deflated. And as I sit down at my computer to work, I wonder just how much better the rest of Bilzerian’s day will be than mine. Significantly better, I’d wager.

Ping! It’s a text from the publicity guy. I no longer have to sign the agreement – just as long as I interview Bilzerian in his driveway. So as to not technically enter his house.

Oh, for God’s...

I’m sprinting back to the car.

‘I was mad. The one time I don’t have a gun and [the Vegas shooting] happened’

An hour or so later, I’m sitting on a dining chair in a driveway so large you could land a 747 on it, with Bilzerian’s Shelby Cobra parked in the garage behind me on the viewing turntable.

Bilzerian has yet to descend from his ultra mansion in the high-speed elevator to fill the chair next to me. I count perhaps a dozen of his employees standing around, watching – including Jim McCormick, the former head of British American Tobacco, who now runs the Instagram star’s cannabis business – while a heroically unflustered *GQ* film crew prepares to capture the proceedings.

Given that everyone was present for the blow-up over the NDA that resulted in my departure – not to mention this suboptimal interview location – it’s a little awkward.

The official purpose of today’s interview, it should be noted, is to discuss the UK debut of Bilzerian’s cannabis company, Ignite International Brands Ltd, which recently completed a so-called “reverse merger” with a publicly listed Canadian gold-mining group, meaning you can now bet your pension fund on the King Of Instagram’s ability to diversify

from nakedness and guns to weed. So far the ride for investors has been, well... not dull. Within months of its public stock offering in May, the company – which is traded in Toronto under the symbol BILZ – lost tens of millions of dollars. To be fair, it’s an obscure, lightly traded stock and thus prone to volatility. And it’s still early days.

Ignite’s initial UK product line is cannabidiol (CBD), a non-psychoactive cannabis extract with multiple claimed medicinal uses, from treating anxiety to acne. You can vape it, take it as a pill, rub it on as a cream, put it in your coffee – it’s a marketer’s dream.

And unlike the kind of medicinal cannabis that gets you high – tightly regulated by the NHS – the sale and use of CBD is absolutely, totally legal-ish.

But I sense there’s another reason for Bilzerian agreeing to talk to *GQ* today. After his sometimes grotesquely provocative rise to fame, the Instagram star, who turns 40 next year, is perhaps finally craving respectability. Which would be quite an achievement for a man who celebrated International Women’s Day in 2017 by posting a picture of himself in a hot tub with five near-naked women, casually eating his dinner off one of their backs. “It’s National Women’s Day. Be thankful. They are good for so many things!” read his caption.

“I think I’m pretty misunderstood,” says Bilzerian, when he finally joins me in the NDA-free zone of his driveway, his photo shoot with several towering models concluded. “I think a lot of people expect me to be a real asshole. That’s a common one. People are like, ‘Wow, I thought you were going to be a total douche-bag.’ And I’m like, ‘Why did you come to my house, then?’ And they’re like, ‘No, no. You’re not like that at all.’ And I’m like, ‘I know!’”

I point out, delicately, that he has rather encouraged this view at times. (For example, by previously having “asshole” as his Twitter bio.) “Yeah... I suppose that’s fair,” he responds. “I’ve also been guilty of seeing someone online and judging them, then I met them in person and found out that they’re completely different. That’s happened more than the opposite.”

So far, I have to confess, Bilzerian is indeed easy company – not a high bar to pass, admittedly, given the expectations set by our initial legal tussle. But is he really maturing?

“It’s a progression,” he says. “I wasn’t going to be that crazy party guy forever. Initially, my focus was the military. [He was a Navy Seal trainee.] Then it was college and women. Then it was gambling and women. And then it was... women. Now it’s more business.”

He pauses, thinks.

“And, y’know... women also.”

At the risk of stating the obvious, Bilzerian is single, although in spite of the 38 women

arriving tomorrow – “Some are staying here. Some I’m dating. It’s a mix” – Bilzerian has been toning things down in recent years, thanks in part to Instagram’s no-nudity policy.

But it’s the latest change to his lifestyle that’s been the most shocking – and not one he has made willingly. “The government has taken the stance that if you’re involved in cannabis, you’re not allowed to own a gun,” he reveals, heavily, adding that the police department in Las Vegas informed him of this policy with a notice revoking his CCW (carrying a concealed weapon) permit. His weapons are now being stored “off site” by a firearms dealer.

“I was a four-year military veteran with honourable discharge, four years active, four years inactive, then I was a cop for four years – and I can’t own a gun, with no felonies?” he snorts. “That’s absurd to me. For smoking a plant!”

(When Bilzerian says he was a cop, incidentally, he means he obtained credentials from the town of Lake Arthur, New Mexico – population 430 – which for years sold membership of its “all-reserve” force to various gun enthusiasts, billionaires and celebrities. The scheme has since been shut down and the police chief ousted, thanks in part to Bilzerian trying to use his badge to borrow an officer’s gun during the Las Vegas mass shooting, on which more later...)

As for exactly how many weapons Bilzerian has had to mothball, it’s anyone’s guess. “Ah, I don’t even know, man,” he admits. “I’ve got so many guns, I couldn’t even count ‘em all.”

Predictably, even the new, more friendly, gun-free Bilzerian has already ruffled beanies in the mellow (and woke) cannabis community. Earlier this year, for example, Ignite put up a gigantic billboard in East Hollywood showing a female model in her underwear feeding grass to a goat. The headline, placed strategically above the woman’s buttocks, was “Nice Grass”. Because grass sounds like ass... and also means cannabis.

Not subtle, no.

One female cannabis entrepreneur spoke out to say that Ignite was “digging its own grave” by alienating female consumers – although there seems to be no shortage of women who follow Bilzerian’s Instagram feed and want to take part in it. (One can only imagine the kind of NDAs they must sign.)

“I mean, look, there are Tom Ford ads where there’s a girl sitting there butt-naked and she’s got a cologne bottle and it’s the only thing covering her vagina,” counters Bilzerian. “But that’s high fashion, so it’s OK. It’s all bullshit, man. I don’t listen to any of that nonsense. We had some girls and I think they were in Calvin

Klein activewear – something you could wear to the gym, for God’s sake – and one of them is holding a goat. That’s so PG, man! I just said: let’s do something funny that has nothing to do with cannabis, something that will catch people’s attention and make them stop and say, ‘What is this? What is Ignite?’”

But perhaps a more interesting question is, “What is Dan Bilzerian?”, especially as he hews ever closer to the mainstream.

When he tells me that, “Part of the brand I’ve built is having the women and having the freedom, not really conforming to society guidelines, doing what makes you happy, regardless of what people think that you should be doing,” he sounds disappointingly like a self-satisfied baby boomer, a throwback tool of the patriarchy, you might say – emphasis on tool – like his hero, Hugh Hefner.

To Bilzerian’s 40m followers, however – most of them too young to know or care much about Great-Grandpa Hef – I suspect he seems more aligned with Mark Manson’s self-empowerment bestseller *The Subtle Art Of Not Giving A F*ck*, which arrived three years ago as a badly needed antidote to crushing

‘It made me realise what vermin the media are. They just want clickbait’

US political correctness. Indeed, when I ask my early-twenties female colleague what she thinks of Bilzerian, she says that his sexism is laughable, not offensive, adding that girls who pose with him are as desperate for attention as he is. Besides, she adds, a woman could easily have a feed with naked, submissive men, overtones of misandry and the same core message. That message being, essentially: fuck you.

Which brings us to the all-important question of authenticity.

There is a theory online that Bilzerian is a kind of social media Wizard Of Oz – a small-time trust-fund baby who has paid and faked his way into looking like a much bigger deal than he is. His jet, for example, is said to be a junker. And public records suggest he rents the home we’re not currently sitting in. It’s unlikely he bought it for \$100m.

But this is all surely beside the point. Because it’s the very mystery of how Dan Bilzerian came to be Dan Bilzerian – and the insanity of the biographical details that have thus far been verified – that make so many people want to follow him.

Besides, reality seems so last century. The feed is all that counts.

I wasn’t born with any of this stuff,” Bilzerian tells me, looking around, when I dig for details of his early life in Tampa, Florida. “Then my dad made a ton of money and we got the house, which I think was the biggest in the state of Florida.” The “we” included his younger brother, Adam, and his mother, Terri. “So now our neighbour’s got the Rolls-Royce, the gold watch, the hot chicks, the cigarette boat – but my dad’s driving around in a Jeep. He just didn’t give a shit. For him, it was more about the power and the control. He never spent his money, didn’t really care about it. So when I made my money, I thought, ‘I’ll buy all the stuff that I want.’”

Before we address that critical word – “made”, with regards to Bilzerian’s money – it’s worth pausing a moment to consider what it was like growing up with a father like Bilzerian Sr. A financier of Armenian descent with a near-genius-level IQ and a used-car salesman’s moustache, Paul Bilzerian was, by most accounts, stubborn, obsessive, prone to grudges and didn’t know when to stop. At one point, ludicrously, he sued his son’s Little League baseball team for slander, only for the case later to be dismissed.

“My relationship with my dad was a little rocky, sure,” confirms Bilzerian, quietly. “The time that I spent with him was basically two hours of Little League practice, six or seven days a week, from the age of five until whenever. If we lost, there was no talking the whole way home. But that seemed normal to me. Later on in life, I realised he was kind of an odd duck and probably a bad parent.”

Not long after Bilzerian Sr struck it rich, his high-stakes bets on publicly traded companies landed him in jail for “stock parking”, an elaborate, legally fuzzy way of manipulating share prices by making it seem like a takeover bid is imminent.

The prosecutor of the case was none other than Rudy Giuliani, later mayor of New York City and advisor to President Donald J Trump. “When my dad got sentenced, all the kids in my class knew about it and I didn’t,” recalls Bilzerian, who says he was about eight years old at the time. “He didn’t tell me until we were driving into school that day, because he thought he was going to win his appeal.”

It was the beginning of a rough period for Bilzerian, who proceeded to get expelled from two schools in one year, ending up in a military academy. After that, the family relocated to Utah, where Bilzerian Sr, now out on parole, became president of a software company of which he is believed to have bought a stake. But the US government wasn’t done with Bilzerian’s father, taking civil action to get back what it said were his ill-gotten gains. Though he had filed for bankruptcy, >>

DAN BILZERIAN

>> he was given a \$62m (£49m) fine and kept up the fight for the next 20 years, grinding down the government's lawyers until they eventually gave up, with one bankruptcy trustee in the case telling the *Wall Street Journal* that Bilzerian Sr was "a little smarter than those who were trying to pursue him".

Bilzerian went on to train as a Navy Seal, but didn't get beyond the notoriously brutal basic underwater demolition/Seal training course, known as bud/S.

Complicating matters, Bilzerian was mid-bud/S when his father got thrown back in prison for evading his fine. "I had to sign over a third of my trust fund to get him out," he says. "They basically held him hostage. The whole thing was so crazy. He didn't talk to me for a while [for giving the government money]. His whole thing was [that] they were wrong and fuck you, but when they told me that they were going to throw my mom in jail and weren't going to let him out unless I signed, I didn't really care about a third of the trust that didn't kick in until I was 35 anyway."

Bilzerian Sr has since moved to St Kitts And Nevis in the West Indies and, according to his son, renounced his US citizenship in protest.

When I ask Bilzerian how things are with his father now, he says they're closer than before. "He just doesn't think like normal people," he says, shrugging. "I think most successful people don't really follow those kind of normal thought processes and that's why they're not doing what most people do. I mean, I've met a lot of guys who are super, super smart, but have terrible judgement in some areas. They're so smart they think it carries over and they've been right before when a lot of other people have been wrong, so when people tell them, 'Hey, you're wrong,' they just ignore it."

Bilzerian could almost be talking about himself – his blind spot being an inability to tell when the nihilistic swagger of his Instagram feed crosses the line into misogyny – but it's a measure of how sane he seems in person that I find myself nodding along.

"I've always said I think I'm a totally normal guy," he tells me. "My whole life, it's been like that. Actually, I take that back. I was kind of a crazy asshole when I was younger. But for the most part, I feel like I've been a steady guy surrounded by maniacs in crazy situations."

It was after the Navy, when Bilzerian was studying business and criminology at the University Of Florida – funded by a \$6,000 (£4,800) a month military veteran's disability allowance – that he learned how to play poker and immediately became addicted to it. This, he insists, is how he "made" his money. Not from the trust funds set up for him by his convicted fraudster >>



**'For the most part,
I feel like I've
been a steady guy
surrounded by maniacs'**



'Initially, my focus was the military,' says Bilzerian. 'Then it was college and women. Then it was gambling and women. Now it's business. And, y'know, women also'

>> father. "That was a common misconception," he says, "and I never corrected it, because it allowed me to get into these really high-stakes private poker games and play with billionaires and have fun gambling. But the truth is I didn't get a dollar until I was 35. And when I did get my trust fund, I gave it all to my father and brother anyway. I didn't take a dollar."

Virtually none of this is verifiable, of course, although Bilzerian was undoubtedly a well-known poker player. That much was clear from the fact he was named in the lawsuits that flew after the exposure of "nosebleed-stakes" Hollywood poker games allegedly involving Ben Affleck, Leonardo DiCaprio, Matt Damon and others. The scandal was that one of the regular players, a wealthy hedge-fund owner named Bradley Ruderman, was operating a Ponzi scheme. His ruse was to lose money in the games – making it look like he was so successful he didn't care – while using those same games to pick up new clients... whose money he would then lose on the games.

"He just seemed like a nice, clueless guy," says Bilzerian of Ruderman. "There was nothing illegal about the games. There was no rake [house commission], no hookers. When you're playing for millions of dollars, people are taking it seriously. They're not in there getting fucked up, thinking about girls. They're focused on the game. They want to win."

Bilzerian's biggest loss in one night, he claims, was \$3.6m (£2.4m). His biggest win: \$12.8m (£10.2m).

This was also the time when he realised that he and a group of around 30 male friends could use their money to hire nightclub promoters, who would in turn organise private parties with all-female guest lists and free bars, catering and entertainment, such as manicurists, tarot card readers and the like. With ten women to every man – and everyone having a good time – it wasn't a challenge to get laid.

Bilzerian has said the girls were using him as much as he was using them. And that seems as true today as it was back then.

I ask him what it's like to win \$12.8m, 270 times the average US salary, in one night. "That was the tail end of an 18-hour session, last hand. I was all-in for probably a \$30m [£24m] pot and the guy I was playing kept me waiting for an hour and a half before he folded," he recalls, making it sound like not much fun at all. "I went into his bathroom and said, 'Just tell me when you've made your decision. I'm not going to sit here and sweat while you determine whether or not you're going to call me.'"

Poker took a toll on Bilzerian, he admits, both physically and mentally.

"It hurts you because you really have to mute your emotions," he says. "If you're emotional about it, it's going to fuck you up. I don't

know if there's anything worse than a gambling addiction. I think it's worse than a drug addiction. I think people probably kill themselves more and ruin their lives more from gambling than they do from drugs."

Does he think that poker make him lose respect for money?

"Absolutely. It's inevitable," he says. "I guess the best way to describe it is if you're down \$5m and you end up losing only \$100,000, you leave that game happy as a clam. But if you're up \$5m then lose it all back and you only win \$100,000, you leave that game pissed."

Bilzerian says he never kicked his gambling habit. He just turned it into a job.

"I found a game that was skill-based – poker – and I realised that if I played against people who I was better than, I would just win money, statistically," he explains. "By the end, I was playing up to 18 hours a day, for six or seven days a week, and if you do anything long enough you're going to get sick of it. I actually don't even like gambling any more."

The story almost didn't end happily, however. When Bilzerian was 25, at the height of his poker career, he suffered two back-

'[Cannabis users] are more likely to put up with their wife than smack her'

to-back heart attacks as a result of his lifestyle – although he says gambling was probably the least of all the aggravating factors. "I would attribute that more to the cocaine, the Viagra, the lack of sleep and being sick and fucking strippers," he says. "It was kind of the perfect storm of bad decisions." He has since had an angiogram, which showed no lasting damage. "I got lucky, for sure," he admits.

The Hollywood poker scandal wasn't the only international news story in which Bilzerian ended up with a bizarre cameo.

On the night of 1 October 2017, he was in Las Vegas with his friend Jake Owen, the country music star, to attend the latter's show at the Route 91 Harvest music festival. Afterwards, he stood in the wings to watch Jason Aldean's set.

Then the gates of hell opened.

"We thought it was gunshots from within the crowd," says Bilzerian, describing the moment that Stephen Paddock opened fire from his hotel room, using AR-15-type rifles with "bump stock" attachments to make them function essentially as fully automatic machine

guns. "So we took off running. And I stopped at a cop car. I just remember trying to get this gun out of the cop car. And thank God I couldn't get it unlocked, because if I was running around with a shotgun, I would probably have got shot by the cops. It was also a blessing that I didn't have a gun on me. Normally, I always had a machine gun in my car and a bulletproof vest. You can imagine, if I'm walking around with a bulletproof vest and a machine gun and some cop sees me – game over. At the time, I was so mad: the one time I don't have a gun this thing happened. But, lo and behold, this guy's 400 yards up in a hotel room. Nobody had a clue."

Bilzerian took video throughout. "You can hear the bullets hitting right next to me," he says of the footage. "Some girl got shot." (His description at the time was more graphic.)

The performers that night have said they were shaken profoundly by the massacre, the deadliest by a lone shooter in US history. "In the weeks that followed, it was a lot of different emotions... guilt, anger and a lot of other things," said Aldean in a television interview last year. Owen, meanwhile, said the deaths changed him, "One hundred per cent... I was there with those people. Why wasn't it me?"

Bilzerian seems unable or unwilling to show such vulnerability. When I ask him how the shooting affected him, if he suffered from PTSD, for example, he just says, "It was shitty."

But he quickly gets emotional when it comes to the press coverage of his involvement, which initially focused heavily on a marine veteran and Medal Of Honor recipient, Dakota Meyer, who criticised Bilzerian for running away from the massacre while filming. "This is what kills me about people like you," wrote Meyer. "Always playing '[special] operator dress-up' and so tough when the cameras are on. A woman just got shot in the head and you are running away filming. That's not what operators do."

Bilzerian remains furious about it. "All these press outlets asked me for interviews, but I didn't want to do any. Then this one marine who wanted to get famous went online and started talking shit, saying that I ran away from the shooting," he says.

In fact, counters Bilzerian, after trying to get a gun out of the police car, "I ran towards the shooting, asking a cop who was running away if he had a machine gun and a pistol. I showed him my badge, because I was a cop at the time [Lake Arthur reservist], but he wouldn't do it. Then my buddies were like, 'The cops are boning out. We gotta get out of here.' So we left, took three girls to the hospital, came back and helped out doing first responder stuff."

Bilzerian isn't done.

"But because I didn't post all the video and do the news interviews, the media ran this

story, which was, 'Oh, Dan Bilzerian runs away from a shooting!' Like that's even a bad thing, right? You're supposed to run! The guy's there shooting at you with a machine gun and if you don't have a gun and someone's shooting at you, you run away! So this idiot marine is not only sending the message that you're not supposed to run when you're in a mass shooting – I mean, think about how stupid this guy is! – [but] on top of that, I actually didn't run away! I was there! For the whole time!"

There's more.

"The thing that hit me after [as opposed to PTSD] was people talking shit, saying, 'Oh, you're a coward,'" he continues. "It actually just made me realise what vermin most of the media was, because at the end of the day they just want clickbait. That's the problem with the media today. They don't care about what's the truth or what's a story. They just want to post what's going to get them the most clicks."

At this point, I want to interrupt, but I'm not sure where to start when it comes to Dan Bilzerian railing against clickbait. I'm also starting to rethink my agreement with him earlier that he comes off as a normal guy. He witnessed 58 people getting ripped to pieces by bullets. And this is what he's upset about.

"And it made me see how fickle and band-wagony our generation is. When one article comes out, they'll go from, 'Oh, this guy's a hero,' to, 'This guy's a piece of shit,'" he goes on. "And how easily influenced people are, how much power the media really has – which I think is the one good thing about social media, in that it's taking away some of that power. I'm bigger than all these [TV news] networks, so I can tell them to go and fuck themselves and post what actually happened. I'm appreciative of having that voice. I look at some of these TV stations: a good show will get one or two million views, but I'm getting 50, 60 million impressions on one post."

For the record, Bilzerian says the shooting didn't change his opinion on America's notoriously lax guns laws. "Most shootings, if you had one or two armed civilians in there, they could actually stop the shooting," he says.

But not in Vegas, I suggest.

"No," he concedes. "That's one rare example where if everyone would have had a gun... it would have probably been worse."

Bilzerian's anti-press tirade has a discernibly Trumpian ring to it, but it also confirms my initial suspicions about him – that he has started to crave more respectability, even legitimacy.

And, perhaps, in the same way he got tired of poker, he's getting tired of girls and partying, now that those things have also become

a job of sorts. Hence his quest to become an entrepreneur. Bilzerian says it's more about wanting to do something less selfish.

"I take some pride that I made a ton of money in poker, but not as much as if I'd gone out and made a business. Because every time I made money in poker, someone else had to lose. It's a zero-sum game," he says. "But when you build a business and you provide a good service, you're making money and the person's getting what they want."

His grand plan, he says, is for Ignite to become "the first global cannabis, CBD and nicotine brand. We want one device that does all three things – and nobody else is doing that." The company is starting with CBD because, unlike products that contain psychoactive THC, it's legal across many territories. Although, of course, Ignite already offers cannabis products in California. But he's sensitive to the charge that CBD is simply a form of snake oil.

"I thought it was complete bullshit, I'll be honest with you," he says. "But then I was helping this seven-year-old kid and he had leukaemia and he was on heavy opioids, in

'I definitely can't go to Azerbaijan now... I'm working on getting diplomatic immunity'

pain a lot. And he told me that by taking CBD in large doses he was able to get off Oxycontin. This kid wasn't selling CBD. He had no agenda. When I heard that, I was just like, 'Wow.'"

Is he concerned about the effects of cannabis on teenage brains? "The problem is they're going to do it," he says. "So if they're going to smoke weed or drink I think it's probably better they smoke. I mean, it's obviously better they don't do any of it, but 16-year-olds are doing ecstasy and cocaine now. When I was a kid, that wasn't a thing." Bilzerian was eleven when he first tried cannabis – on a golf course. He was with a friend and they tore around in golf carts, having a great time.

Interestingly, Bilzerian doesn't think the prospect of legal weed means the end of alcohol, in spite of falling consumption.

"Alcohol's got a place," he says. "If you want to go to a bar, get some confidence to go talk to a girl, smoking a joint's not the answer. But when you overdo it with drinking, it has a ton of health repercussions, not only for you, but for the people around you: drinking and driving, domestic violence.

People don't get high [on cannabis] and go beat the shit out of people. They're more likely to put up with a ton of shit from their wife, as opposed to smacking her. It's an opposite vibe."

Clearly, with Bilzerian making comments such as these – smoke weed so you don't smack your wife! – Ignite's investors are going to need balls of steel. Then again, this is Dan Bilzerian, so any number of other disasters could befall him before he gets tripped up by a mere insensitive choice of words.

Just a few months ago, he visited Armenia with his brother and somehow ended up shooting tanks and rocket launchers in a disputed territory – which has landed him on an international most-wanted list in neighbouring Azerbaijan. "I had no idea," he protests. "I didn't know what territories they own. It was the first time I'd ever been in that country! It was unfortunate. I definitely can't go to Azerbaijan now, but I wouldn't want to anyway. I think it's kind of a shithole. And I'm working on getting diplomatic immunity, so I don't have to deal with that shit."

Regardless of whether Bilzerian turns out to be an asset or liability for Ignite, his ambitions don't end with cannabis. He has a pheromone-infused male-grooming line, Alister ("Scientifically proven to attract females"), and a soon-to-launch gambling app. After he met with President Trump at Trump International Hotel in 2015 – "He knew my dad, so we talked a little bit about my dad, business stuff, gun stuff. He seemed like a pretty laid-back guy, but I don't really get super into politics" – he is nursing ambitions to one day run for public office. He says he would campaign as an independent on a libertarian platform.

"People have said I was crazy a lot of times along the way," he tells me, dead serious. "They've said, 'Ah, you'll never be able to do this, you'll never be able to do that.' But I think that I'm going to build a multibillion-dollar business here. And then, when I'm ready, I'll go and become president."

Once upon a time, this last part might have raised a laugh. But all I can think is: please, God, no. **GQ**

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- **The Truth About Dan Bilzerian** (Chris Ayres, July 2017)
- **How Dan Bilzerian Would Prepare For An MMA Fight** (March 2017)
- **The 27 Most Ridiculous Dan Bilzerian Instagram Posts** (March 2016)

A black and white close-up portrait of Riccardo Tisci, Burberry's chief creative officer. He is a man with dark, wavy hair, a well-groomed beard, and a serious expression, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a dark tuxedo jacket over a white dress shirt and a dark bow tie. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Burberry's chief creative officer, Riccardo Tisci; (opposite) the designer's AW19 showcase, his second collection for the British brand, London, 17 February

'I'm fascinated when houses belong to the culture of a country. Burberry represents Britishness'

TISCI X BURBERRY

THIS CHECKERED ISLE

During a 12-year tenure at that most French of fashion maisons Givenchy, Riccardo Tisci reshaped athleisurewear with his uniquely Catholic melancholia. Having since crossed the channel, he is now the lead at none-more-British brand Burberry. Ahead of his SS20 show, GQ met the heritage label's chief creative officer to discuss the inspiration he draws from our divided nation

Story by **Alexander Fury** Photographs by **Richard Dowker** Styling by **Luke Day**





When in March 2018 the designer Riccardo Tisci was announced as chief creative officer of British behemoth Burberry – the only luxury brand listed on the FTSE 100, with a turnover hovering around £2.72 billion as of the last financial year’s takings – eyebrows were raised. That wasn’t due to a lack of commercial success nor understanding of big business (Tisci has both). It was more the fact that, well, Tisci isn’t British: he is Italian, born in 1974 in Cermenate, near Lake Como. And his name was established during a 12-year tenure at Givenchy, that most patrician and aristocratically French of fashion houses, where Tisci was one of only a handful of designers to create haute couture, while also offering couture-tinged ready-to-wear for women and, more unexpectedly, men. With more than a touch of small-mindedness, many commentators couldn’t see how Riccardo Tisci could, on the one hand, interpret the quintessence of Britishness embedded in Burberry and, on the other, understand the complexities of our strange little society. “I’m not British, obviously,” says Tisci, in his still-heavy Italian accent. “But I lived here when I was young. I studied here. I graduated here. I have to give all my gratitude to England. England made me.” He pauses. “But at the same time, what is it today, to be British?”

That is a question that feels particularly resonant in the United Kingdom at the moment, especially given the current political melee (which may or may not be resolved

by the time you’re reading this). “What I’m interested in, in England, in a moment like this, are the changes in culture because of Brexit and many other things,” Tisci says. He’s careful and measured – how anyone is when you talk about Brexit, especially in fashion. His thick black eyebrows frequently furrow. “I’m interested in how Britishness is developing in different ways.”

In a sense, Tisci is now part of said “Britishness”. Burberry is a company that is a component of our national identity, with its royal warrant and trench coats

‘This huge Burberry empire is not only about the trench, the history, the check’

and checks dressing every echelon of society since Thomas Burberry founded the company as a 21-year-old in 1856. There was already some Britishness to Tisci: he first came to the country in 1991, when he was 17, and later studied at Central Saint Martins. His work is tinged with a rebellion often perceived as distinctly English, born from punk and the revolutionary work of Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood – the first person Tisci chose to collaborate with at Burberry, on a capsule collection that reiterated her Nineties greatest

hits, which Tisci knew well and evidently still loves.

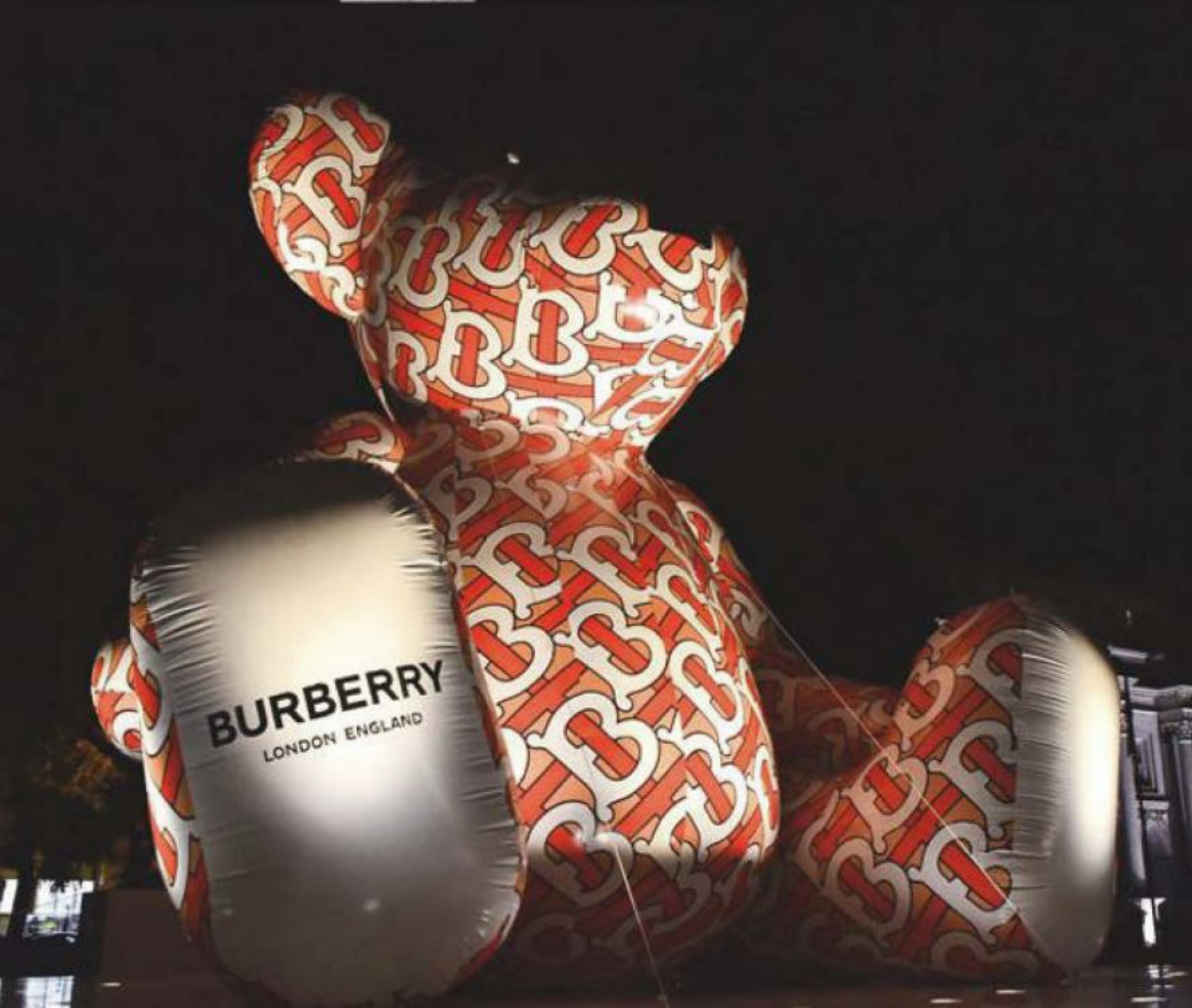
Tisci seems to have taken the nationalistic questioning in his stride. “Most of the time, people have said to me, ‘You’re not Italian,’” he says, despite that accent apparently. “At one point people thought I was Belgian, because I was dark, or French, maybe Latin, never Italian.” And although Tisci follows Yorkshireman Christopher Bailey in the position as Burberry’s chief creative officer, there is an Italian forebear at the company: the American-born Italian Roberto Menichetti designed Burberry from 1998 to 2001, the first full-fledged fashion revival of the label. Its zenith (or nadir, depending on your point of view) were paparazzi shots of the actress Danniella Westbrook in head-to-toe tartan with matching baby stroller in 2002. She was soon associated with the controversial epithet “chav” and Burberry check vanished from the house’s collections for a few years.

It was viewed pejoratively, but in fact it demonstrated the power of Burberry. It is a name and a style with a resonance and appeal far beyond fashion. Which is one of the things that attracted Tisci to the house in the first place. The designer had elected to take a sabbatical from his position as one of the longest-serving artistic directors in contemporary fashion; no fuss, no drama, a simple and clean break. “Fashion is going very fast, much faster than before. I took that time to think about it,” Tisci says. “Then Burberry called me.” He was offered a number of other roles during that time, which, he hastens to add diplomatically, were all “amazing”. But, out of them all, he took the Burberry gig for three fundamental reasons: “I’m fascinated when houses belong to the culture of a country. I think Burberry represents Britishness. What really got me as well was not to do only fashion, but lifestyle. Because this huge empire is not only about the trench, the history, the check. I think people buy fashion, but mostly, the young generation, they buy what has an allure, a dream.”

Tisci stops and draws breath. He speaks quickly, articulately, but with ideas and sentences bubbling over one another expressively. You get the same patter backstage at his Burberry shows and, indeed, visually in the shows themselves: he named his second, for Autumn/Winter 2019, “Tempest”, inspired by the aforementioned contrasts in British culture, as well as its weather. That is of course an unavoidable, stereotypical source of British conversation; Tisci has always had a good sense of humour. But that latter component was apt for an Autumn/Winter show, with men dressed in layered-up down jackets and rain macs and >>



Clockwise from top left: Taron Egerton sits front row at Riccardo Tisci's AW19 Burberry show in London (also above left and above right); Tisci with Kendall Jenner, Kourtney Kardashian and Kim Kardashian West, Paris, 2016; with Steven and Liv Tyler, Paris, 2015; Tisci's AW14 Givenchy menswear show, Paris; the LFW 2018 Thomas Burberry Bear; with Kanye West and Madonna, New York, 2014



TISCI X BURBERRY

>> a puffer-clad male model toting a Union Jack survival blanket (at a time when the kingdom feels less than united), all mixed with city boys in slick suits in tonal caramel combinations of Burberry beige and even a gentle revival of that much-maligned red-threaded check. Burberry past and present, blending to make Burberry's future. We were in the very eye of the storm.

But that's only two reasons. "The third one is because of [Burberry CEO] Marco Gobbetti." That bears examination: because designers often tell you they love where a house sits in popular consciousness (although few have the near-universal comprehension enjoyed by Burberry) and the idea of crafting a universe. The CEO, on the other hand, rarely gets a mention and is often viewed as an adversary – even Pierre Bergé, the partner of Yves Saint Laurent who headed his couture house from 1961 until Saint Laurent's retirement in 2002, had a tempestuous relationship with his creative charge. Tisci's harmony with Gobbetti was, for a long time, a near-unique industry example. The latter, then CEO of Givenchy, met the former when Tisci presented his womenswear show in Milan in February 2005. Givenchy was at that point without an artistic director: despite a bunch of other designers being in the running, Gobbetti took a punt on an unknown. "He took the risk to really give me a chance," Tisci says. "Back then I was very punk. I didn't want to do Givenchy. I did it because... financial," he says with a shrug.

Tisci comes from a working-class Italian family, originating in the south but moving to the north to pursue prosperity in the Seventies. But his father died in 1978, leaving the family – consisting of his mother and eight sisters, with Tisci the youngest and the only male – in a precarious situation. It necessitated the children to contribute, when old enough, to its support. Tisci has previously stated that he took the Givenchy job to be able to buy his mother a house. "But then I realised that the man that was in front of me was like the father I never had," he said. The happy marriage of a designer and CEO has

since become something of an industry standard, with in-sync creative and commercial duos, such as Gucci's Alessandro Michele and Marco Bizzarri and Saint Laurent's Anthony Vaccarello and Francesca Bellettini, coupling business and pleasure to multibillion-pound success. Yet Tisci and Gobbetti's is an extraordinary story, with much emotion attached. It's beyond business and even beyond fashion.

Emotion is something one often associates with Tisci and his designs. In the past, he's created clothes expressive of his Catholic upbringing, brimming with darkness and, if torment is the wrong word, then definitely with a certain melancholy. But in person Tisci is gregarious,

We meet ten days before his SS20 Burberry show, in London in September, Tisci's third since he joined the British brand. He's tanned from a summer vacation – an Italian tradition of August as a holiday month he's keen to cling on to, even though he's now based in London. Last year, he wasn't able to take the time before his first Burberry show – and he's about to enter a familiar but still intensive period of long days and sleepless nights. "This season's going to be a big shock, because I'm feeling more and more confident. It's going to be much more sensual, much more romantic, much more me, [but] still with the British side. You're trying to do things that you know will sell well – but I don't want the company to become a company that sells only basics," he tells me only five minutes

into our conversation. He also lets drop that 30 to 45 per cent of menswear sales are to women. "The good thing with Burberry is we know who is buying our clothes," he says, grinning. And Tisci isn't just interested in what sells, but how: since he began at Burberry, the company has adopted a sportswear-influenced model of incremental drops, releasing product on the 17th day of each month (17 is Tisci's lucky number) and generating frenzied desire among consumers.

Creating desire for menswear is one of Tisci's talents: during his time at Givenchy, his menswear shifted industry goalposts, virtually inventing a new notion

of fashion-conscious hyper-masculinity that's now widely familiar, with sports stars such as LeBron James, Odell Beckham Jr, Lewis Hamilton and Ruben Loftus-Cheek wearing flamboyant styles that nevertheless exude machismo. Often, his clothes coupled sportswear elements with couture detailing: embroideries of pearls, dentelle and guipure lace more commonly seen on wedding gowns, gold studs and floral patterns. They were bold and brave looks that, pre-Tisci, simply didn't exist in mainstream fashion: "The T-shirt, the boxers, a lot of streetwear nobody was doing, a lot of print, a lot of denim with leggings, things that..." Tisci runs through his greatest hits at breakneck speed. "Very masculine, very gymnasium, more Latin, because, for me, the chic part of Frenchness is all about >>



'I'm gay and I love fashion and I like to wear clothes that people call "straight"'

smiling and warm. He's excited by the opportunities offered by Burberry, by the breadth of his new position, by the opportunity to dress the world, not just Britain, in his brand of Britishness. And you feel that excitement and generosity in his Burberry shows. Mixing up menswear and womenswear, they frequently feel not like two but four shows in one, pumping out an array of ideas and, let's be blunt here, product. Contrary to popular view of designer as creative genius agonising in an ivory tower and expecting moneymen to make commercial sense of his outpourings, Tisci is embedded in the business of Burberry. Perhaps that is in part due to his relationship with Gobbetti or maybe it's just in his nature. He cares about what is bought, how and why. Tisci is savvy.



Coat, £2,990. Hoodie, £650.
Polo shirt, £320. Trousers,
£550. All by **Burberry**.
uk.burberry.com

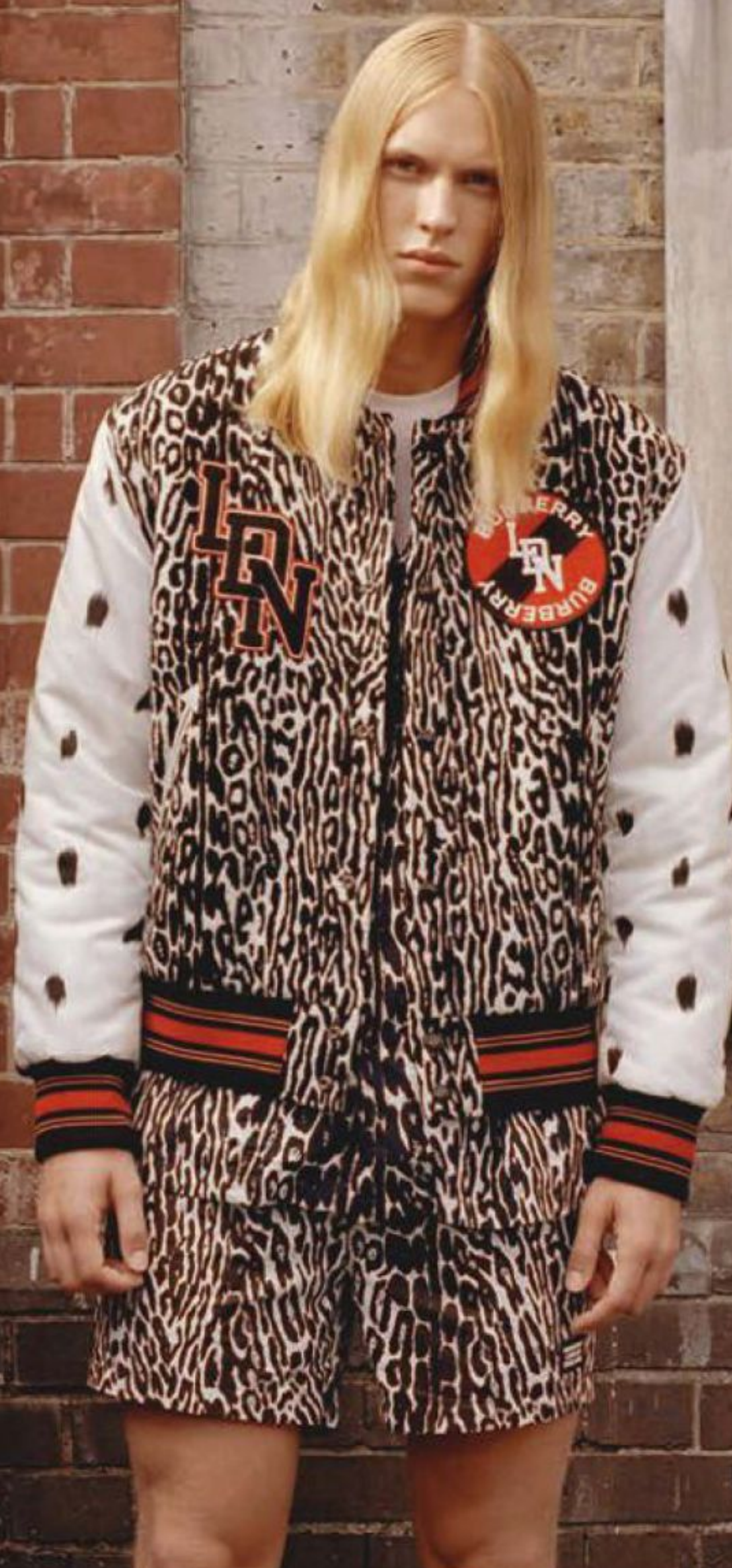
‘The young
generation
mostly buy an
allure, a dream’

Coat, £1,990. Hoodie, £650. T-shirt, £350. Hat, £290. All by **Burberry**.
uk.burberry.com



TISCI X BURBERRY

Jacket, £1,790.
Shirt, £450. T-shirt,
£350. Shorts, £240.
All by **Burberry**.
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**‘A woman can wear
men’s suits and a guy
can wear a lace shirt.
It’s about confidence’**

>> the mix of Arabic and African and Moroccan.” That was reflected as much in the models he used – a whole new array of beefed-up types, often Brazilian, who were an antidote to the slender silhouettes of the time. And Tisci cuts – and still cuts – a great suit, alongside that sportswear, tight and curved, emphasising a muscled build of men (this is pre-*Love Island*, remember) relatively newly conscious of their bodies, working on them and wanting to show them off. “It’s done very well, the suit,” says Tisci of his new Burberry offerings, which, for winter, are single-breasted and sharp, slim and pinched in at the waist, formal but not fusty.

“When I arrived in fashion, I didn’t want to do menswear,” Tisci states, bluntly. “It was Marco that pushed me after three years. Then I started slowly. It was very successful.” Tisci is being breathtakingly modest when he cites success: unlike most fashion houses, weighed towards accessories and/or womenswear as the cash cow, Givenchy revenue was reputed

to be almost evenly split between men’s and womenswear. LVMH, the conglomerate that owns Givenchy, does not break out individual incomes for their brands nor categories within them. However, upon Tisci’s departure in 2017, the industry title *Women’s Wear Daily* reported that Givenchy’s turnover increased more than six-fold during Tisci’s time there, with revenue exceeding half a billion euros.

Nevertheless, despite that initial reticence to design menswear, Tisci’s point of view proved bold and distinct. In fact, it wasn’t so much a point of view on what men were wearing as on men in general – and it became an industry shifter. “It was a moment when everything was very skinny, very young, very beautiful, very tight. It was very body-conscious,” says Tisci of the moment he showed his first menswear collection in June 2008. “So me, I came with something that going around the

shops I couldn’t find. Today you can talk about genderless, but at the time you had menswear for gay people and menswear for straight people. And I was like, ‘I’m gay and I’m not ashamed of it, but I love fashion and I like to wear clothes in these sort of ways, which is very normal, which people call straight,’ which was very stupid for me. So I started to build around the idea of being confident of your sexuality. A woman can wear men’s suits during the day and a guy can wear a lace shirt – it’s not about the look, it’s about your confidence.”

Tisci is confident. He is a Leo, like Gabrielle Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent. And in a similar fashion to both those epoch definers, Tisci has a strong point of view, firmly imposed – direct, emphatic and unwavering. In retrospect, his first menswear collection for Givenchy didn’t introduce a Givenchy man so much as a Riccardo Tisci man. Yet Tisci’s Burberry isn’t about a man; indeed, it feels old-fashioned to talk about a “man”, >>

Puffer jacket,
£1,290. Jacket, £890.
Hoodie, £490. T-shirt,
£290. Hat, £690.
All by **Burberry**.
uk.burberry.com

‘Britain represents
duality. You have the
Queen and aristocracy,
then you have this
other side, the punk’



>> given Tisci's plurality of vision. His Burberry is about men, about city suits and sportswear striding alongside one another. He classes his Burberry, like British society, into distinct strata: lady and gentleman, girl and boy. But they are presented together in shows staged on an epic scale, with the pomp and circumstance of, say, an opening of parliament or a royal wedding.

There's nothing schlocky or caricatured about it: rather, it is attuned to a time in which perceptions of society are fragmenting, when "Britishness" can mean many things, despite attempts to pigeonhole it and prevent perceived outside intrusion (or, indeed, immigration). Tisci's Burberry Britishness is multicultural, multilayered, a multiverse. It melds together socioeconomic and class signifiers, cultural origins and the age gaps of man and boy. You wind up with suits next to shorts, football shirts alongside elegant coats, a touch of drapery evocative of the Middle Eastern dress you maybe see around London's Hackney or Whitechapel next to West End tailoring. He's avoided, thus far, hunting pinks and the Sloane shibboleth of the current upper-class uniform of choice: the red trouser. But maybe that's still to come. All in all, there's nothing small-minded about it.

"When sometimes you do your own culture, you put in your own private, personal experience," reasons Tisci, perhaps making the case why, as an outsider, he can perceive British culture with a wider sweep than a countryman could. "I won't say I'm the right person for this house," he says, smiling and pausing, maybe letting me take in the fact that the CCO of one of the largest fashion companies in the world has implied he maybe isn't the best fit for the job. "But what for me is very important with Burberry is the fact that this country, in history, is the most representative country of duality. You have the Queen, aristocracy, culture, intellectually, the elegance, the perfection. Then you always have this other side. First the punk, then the skinhead. That is the beauty. That is the first thing I want to build at Burberry: [the idea] that Britishness is these two very strong identities. Now I'm living here, I live in this history. I feel it." **GQ**

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TISCI X BURBERRY



Field jacket, £890.
Jacket, £1,190. Shirt,
£370. Tie, £140.
Trousers, £550. Shoes,
£590. Gloves, £290.
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A villa on Mustique's
Britannia Bay, a
neighbour of the house
built by David Bowie and
later bought by magazine
impresario Felix Dennis

Photographs: Alamy; Graciela Cattarossi

THE Battle FOR Mustique

For 70 years, the private playground of Starmen, Stones and HRHs evolved at the whims of its boldface residents. Now, with a string of island upstarts coming for its throne – developed by and for the world's new deep pockets – GQ uncovers a modern world of island wars, and watches as Mustique digs in for a fight on the beaches

Story by Dylan Jones



Sir Richard Branson's Mosquito Island in the British Virgin Islands, acquired by the mogul in 2007 to build a luxury home and resort

The litany of delights awaiting you as you arrive by turboprop Twin Otter at Mustique's tiny private airport seems constitutionally finite. There is the daily game of scratch volleyball down by Macaroni Beach, the Caribbean-tinged nightcaps at Basil's Bar (one of the few examples of a legendary venue that has survived a wholesale overhaul), the lazy afternoon swims at Gellicieux Beach, the relentless party invitations (always hand-delivered by the hosts' butlers), the golf buggies that guests use to ferry themselves around the island, the Tuesday-evening drinks at The Cotton House (one of only two hotels on the island), the sundowner cocktails at The Beach Café and the unashamedly English nature of the dinner instructions: 8.30pm, and don't be late.

Without any street signs, cashpoints (Mustique is a cashless society; everything is signed for and you never need money or credit cards the entire time you are there) or gawping day-trippers, Mustique remains inviolate, still the most glamorous resort in the world, if not necessarily the coolest. There are no nightclubs on Mustique, no industrial-sized hotels to attract the hard-partying boat people of the Med, no paparazzi to make the itinerant celebrity feel at home, no velvet ropes. Immune to private members' clubs, EDM DJs, society photographers or the kind of boldface names that treat their downtime as a media opportunity, the island has a social ecosystem that is only rivalled by the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club.

That's the beauty of Mustique: the order, the regimentation, the etiquette.

If there's one story that exemplifies the correctness of the island and its ability to be a standard bearer for the old ideas of empire, it's the one concerning a then 20-year-old member of the royal family who pitched up at a grand house towards the north of the island a few years ago. Left to fend for himself by his parents, who had flown back to Blighty for a family emergency, he was invited to various lunches and dinners by biddable neighbours. Having turned up at said house, he was warmly embraced by the owners, offered Aperol and nibbles and asked seemingly anodyne questions about his provenance: "Family all good?" "Enjoying the island this year?" "How's school?" etc. After 20 minutes or so, the scion suddenly twigged.

"I say. You're not the Camerons, are you?"

"Oh, no, dear," said his hosts, almost as one. "They live next door."

Such are the levels of hospitality on the island that they wouldn't have dreamed of turning the young man away. And there's the rub: if you embrace the island then the island will embrace you. Another story involves the financier Mark Cecil, who went to the wrong house one night and spent more than 30 minutes with a familiar-looking woman before it finally dawned on him that she was not holding a party that night and was in fact having a quiet evening in. As he was leaving, he finally introduced himself and she did the same. Her name was Meg Ryan.

Mustique is not exactly an island that roars with excess and yet the history of the island is the history of international jet-set travel, a world photographed by Slim Aarons, an island bolthole that has been at the intersection of rock and royalty for 70 years. Mustique is where Princess Margaret could be caught jitterbugging in Basil's Bar, where Sir Mick Jagger and David Bowie could be found singing carols in the same pew at Christmas, where the artist Marc Quinn might still be found dabbing and

'Mustique was pitched somewhere between lunch at Balmoral and a hen party in Ibiza'

where Lewis Hamilton was once so late for a beach party he actually turned up the next day. One year at the annual town hall meeting, the PA system failed, so the islanders were treated to the surreal sight of Mick Jagger and Bryan Adams scrabbling around on their hands and knees trying to fix it.

"Playground of the rich and famous" has become the boilerplate description of Mustique, the 1,400-acre private island in Saint Vincent And The Grenadines, but it wasn't always that way. The first European mention of the island comes from Spanish explorers in the 15th century, when it was inhabited by the Carib people. Fought over by various colonial empires, the island was, like the rest of the Grenadines, valued for its sugar production, but went into decline in the 19th century, when demand for sugar could be met more cheaply from elsewhere.

Mustique first made its way into popular consciousness in 1958, when Colin Tennant, later Lord Glenconner, acquired the island for £45,000, pointing out to his wife that it would actually be cheaper to spend their winters here rather than heat the family pile in Scotland. (Let's face it, there are worse reasons to buy

a Caribbean island.) It had no running water, jetty or landing strip and Tennant initially intended to plant cotton on it. That ambition changed in 1960, when Tennant gave Princess Margaret a plot of land there as a wedding gift. She used it to build a villa, Les Jolies Eaux, and in doing so thrust Mustique into the public eye as an exclusive luxury holiday destination.

In order to develop Mustique, Tennant encouraged people to buy plots, develop their own villas and invest equally in the island's infrastructure, leading to a mutually beneficial co-operative arrangement. The need for a paparazzi-free refuge from the press back home meant it appealed to both literal and pop royalty and over the years Mustique's list of big-name property owners would grow: Bryan Adams, Tommy Hilfiger, Mick Jagger and David Bowie, among others (Jagger owns two houses on the island). The names of Mustique's prominent guests read like a potted history of pop culture, from Paul Newman and Raquel Welch in the Sixties all the way through to Johnny Depp and Jude Law today. More recently, the Duke and Duchess Of Cambridge returned with their children to celebrate Prince George's sixth birthday, while Ellie Goulding spent her honeymoon here. Other regulars include Geri Horner (née Halliwell), Robbie Williams, Tom Ford, Bryan Ferry, Adam Clayton, Paul McCartney, Bill Gates and the Beckhams. Earlier in the year, Noel and Liam Gallagher found themselves staring at each other in Basil's Bar, unaware they were both on the island.

Mustique has consistently adapted over the decades to sit as comfortably as possible with the social and economic zeitgeist; in 1968, The Mustique Company was formed, allowing the island to negotiate relaxations on import tax with the Vincentian government in return for an annual fee. Throughout the Eighties, planning laws were relaxed and a shareholder system was introduced to bring more investment to the island and to make it financially independent. The Nineties and noughties saw an influx of entrepreneurs and businesspeople, for whom privacy had become as important as it was for film stars and royalty in its early years. And in the age of social media, Mustique continues to strike a balance between glamour and mystique, regularly appearing in the pages of glossy magazines, but maintaining a level of inaccessibility and opacity to outsiders.

Now, Mustique has a population of a few hundred, which rises to more than a thousand during peak season. More than 20 different nationalities number among the island's >>

In a group shot of Mustique's community, Princess Margaret and the island's owner, Colin Tennant, pose on a chaise longue, 1973



If you want muggles to gawp at your new £40,000 watch you'd be much better off in Saint Barts



You wouldn't put a
drum machine on a
Stones record.
Why put a seven-star
spa on Mustique?



Clockwise from left: Mustique's famed travellers,
Jerry Hall and Mick Jagger, 1987; Amy Winehouse,
2007; Felix Dennis, 2000; Johnny Depp, Noel
Gallagher, Kate Moss and Meg Mathews, 1996;
David Bowie, 1992; Princess Margaret, 1985; the
Duke and Duchess Of Cambridge, 2008; Lord and
Lady Glenconner, 1973



MUSTIQUE

>> homeowners and roughly 100 of its villas are available to rent, including Les Jolies Eaux, which was sold by the Earl Of Snowdon in 1999. With its unique history, strict privacy and ideal location, Mustique remains the bar against which other private islands are judged.

Unlike the South Of France, where every vista teems to the point of hallucination, here the views are calm, empty, and – saliently – devoid of noise. The stars are here in force, not that you ever see them, and they certainly don't use the island as somewhere to show off. Paparazzi are not tolerated at all and if you want muggles to gawp at your new £40,000 watch you'd be much better off in Saint Barts. Here, royals really do mix with commoners, although the commoners are quite unlike those found anywhere else in the world. This is a legacy that began when Princess Margaret started treating the island like her own personal fiefdom, a world that was anecdotally meant to be rather decadent. How risqué was the Princess' life on Mustique? According to the great satirist Craig Brown, who wrote about the Queen's late sister in his hilarious book *Ma'am Darling: 99 Glimpses Of Princess Margaret*, she was certainly game – cavorting with the locals as well as fellow Brits – although at other times proper. "Buxom in her floral swimsuit, tipsy in the foreign sun, her adherence to protocol remained doggedly intact," says Brown. "By all accounts, it was a curious combination of the jaunty and the ceremonial, the tone pitched somewhere between a lunch party at Balmoral and a hen party on Ibiza."

"Anyone who overstepped the mark could expect a swift tongue-lashing. Those who arrived too late or left too early could expect to be taken down a peg or two."

Mustique certainly has gold-standard bedside manners. When I visited the island recently, I developed quite a severe toothache, the result of a complex and rather protracted root canal operation. After I fortuitously bumped into the island's doctor, Michael Bunbury, at a cocktail party that night, he sped off to find me some remarkably strong painkillers and was also incredibly responsive the following day when I emailed him in a panic about my anticipated recovery. I have to say, having been ill all over the world – extreme food poisoning in Formentera, a trapped nerve in Tokyo and altitude sickness in Bhutan – I'm used to the perfunctory nature of overseas medical care, even in ritzy resorts. Dr Bunbury not only behaved as though my ailment was medically fascinating (it wasn't), but he also conveyed a kind of conspiratorial balm, almost as though he'd been waiting years to be able to >>



>> prescribe this precise composite of antibiotics. I left the surgery with a haversack of pills and a new-found sense of wellbeing. In fact, I almost felt entitled, safe in the knowledge I had just made the good doctor's day, even though all he'd really done was slip me a large pouch of oversized pellets.

In hindsight, I suppose I wouldn't have expected anything else, because while Mustique is the ultimate chic refuge, it is also rather like some extraordinarily complex extended family, where strangers are absorbed effortlessly and wayward relatives tolerated beyond reason. The social ecosystem here on the world's most seductive island is one you'll never need to understand, because you'll never have to. Do you love Saint Barts? Adore Saint Tropez? Can't wait for the season to start in Ibiza? You're going to hate Mustique, regardless of how good its doctor is. There is a hum of glamour on the island, even though you very rarely see it, while discretion is almost a by-law. If Cara Delevingne, beauty queen Charlotte Tilbury or Bulgarian telecoms giant Spas Roussev throw a party, it is very unlikely you won't be invited, because by dint of being on the island you are usually invited to everything, while there is the automatic expectation that you will bring the entire household, irrespective of age. Children of all ages are treated as adults on the island.

I've stayed as a guest, I've rented houses, and you only have to be here for ten minutes to feel as though you have been accepted as part of the firm. Whether or not this is true is of course immaterial, as the important thing about Mustique is the way it makes you feel. Honestly, what other island would think of employing Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski as tennis coaches?

However, there are some who say the island is in danger of losing its edge and that it misses the likes of the late Felix Dennis, the maverick magazine publisher who regularly flew party girls to his house on Mustique. His optimum number was always four and they were all told to bring "toys" and would cavort about on his enormous bed while he sat in his chair and hoovered up vast amounts of cocaine. Dennis was larger than life, although perhaps not as large as his own. In the Nineties his *Maxim* brand was one of the biggest in the publishing industry and he would regularly commute to its New York HQ from his house on the island. One of my friends started working for *Maxim* in the early Nineties and had only been there a few days when, one lunchtime, he heard a huge commotion in the reception. He then saw Dennis storm into the boardroom, swearing profusely, and immediately light up a huge cigar. Thinking this was an ideal

opportunity for him to ingratiate himself, my friend walked in and asked if he was all right.

"Am I all right?" repeated Dennis. "No, I am not fucking all right, seeing that you asked."

"Oh, I'm very sorry about that," said my friend. "Why is that, sir?"

"Why is that?" mimicked Dennis, who was by now screaming at the top of his voice. "Because my fucking doctor has just told me I have to give up fucking crack. That's why!"

He wasn't joking.

Dennis is much missed on the island, as he had the ability to regularly shatter Mustique's air of calm.

"There are a few too many pink trousers on Mustique nowadays," says someone who has lived on the island for most of his life. "It's a little too corporate, a little too hedge fund, a little less crazy than it used to be. That's the thing – Mustique has always welcomed mavericks, although I'm not sure there are that many mavericks left."

Dennis had bought his house from David Bowie, who in turn had been inspired to build on the island in 1989 by Mick Jagger, who has owned properties here since the Seventies.

It's still an Oliver Messel dreamscape underneath a Truman Show canopy

This was during a time when the island was experiencing its second flash of fame.

"I first met David at a fashion function in New York, raising money for aids at the Armory Show," says Tommy Hilfiger. "We sat next to each other and had a long talk. I'd just come back from Mustique and we were chatting about the island, because he had just started to build his home there. It was called Britannia Bay House – six acres, five bedrooms. Then, a few years later, in the early Nineties, just after the house was finished, he invited me for a New Year's Eve party. I was building my own house and renting a house next to Mick Jagger's. David's home was magnificent, overlooking Britannia Bay. He had commissioned Arne Hasselqvist, a Swede who had also built houses for Mick and Princess Margaret. He also built my house. It was Balinese and impeccable and the interior was done by the Bali-based designer Linda Garland. Arne said David was 'the most meticulous person he'd ever met'."

A year later, Bowie and Hilfiger were both going down to Mustique at the same time; the designer had chartered a jet and had asked the singer to join him. Hilfiger had no idea

Bowie was terrified of flying, but he let it slip on the way to the airport in New York. "He actually said, 'I'm really, really afraid of flying.' He asked all these technical questions about the plane and I could tell that he was nervous. So we boarded the aircraft and he seemed OK until we took off. He was holding on to the arm rests on the seat [and] was almost white knuckling it. But after we took off and went up into the air he was calm."

Spend any time on Mustique and you'll start to meet Bowie's ghost, whether it's in Basil's Bar, the waterfront dive bar where everyone on the island still congregates after dark (Bowie was a regular and would occasionally get up to sing with whatever house band happened to be playing there; he would also refer to one of the house cocktails as a "Penis Colada") or at The Cotton House Hotel, where every Tuesday there is still a weekly meet-and-greet, at which you get to see who is staying on the island ("It's dog and lamp-post time," says one regular), or, indeed, on one of the many beaches. When Bowie was on the island he tended to be extremely sociable and even before he started coming with Iman would spend his evenings carousing with the likes of Bryan Ferry and Mick Jagger. He held parties, went to parties and encouraged anyone he met to host one. "He liked to party," says one resident. He sang in the choir in the local Bamboo Church every Christmas and even ventured out onto the ocean (he didn't learn to swim until 1980 and was never very confident in the water).

Bowie was a big entertainer at his home, but he started to tire of the island once he'd met and married Iman. One thing a few people on the island have mentioned to me is that one of the reasons Iman wanted to leave Mustique was because all the "help", everyone in service, was black and it made her feel uncomfortable.

In 1994 Bowie sold the house to Felix Dennis, who immediately started reconfiguring the property, while commissioning a huge sculpture of two mating tortoises that can still be seen from the road today. The house came with most of its contents, at least most of the furniture. Apparently there was a painting Iman wanted to keep, which had been included in the sale. David Cherry, who used to work for Dennis, says that when Bowie asked Dennis if he could have the painting back, Dennis said, "Sure, if you buy the whole house with it." He asked Cherry to make a CD-ROM game, called *Mandalay Mystery*, which was an interactive tour of the house that revealed the painting to be at the bottom of Dennis' infinity pool. The house's garden designer, Made Wijaya, said the house >>



Clockwise from above: Pierre Vincent Marais and his wife, Isabelle, holiday with friends at Gellicieux House, their home on Mustique, 1989; island institution Basil's Bar; The Cotton House is one of only two hotels on Mustique



>> was destroyed when Dennis bought it. “He was a bit famous for his Philistine behaviour.” He says the house was “a blaze of Victorian exotica. It really was very special. Then Felix came along, ripped it out and installed an air-conditioned games parlour. He got some shop dresser from Harrods to do the interiors and then actually went over to Bali and bought all this mindless crap. It was one of my only great gardens that has been destroyed. I have been back there and it really was depressing.”

Dennis was to Mustique what Peter Langan was to his eponymous London restaurant in the Eighties. His legacy is those fornicating tortoises, an arresting sight that still brings a touch of frat house authenticity to the otherwise luxe tranquillity.

But while Mustique is hospitable to its guests, it doesn’t especially warm to outsiders. And sometimes it even tries to keep its residents in check. Several years ago, some like-minded souls tried to buy Basil’s Bar, the island institution that for decades had been run by its namesake, Basil Charles. Almost immediately, The Mustique Company stepped in, determined to keep it as part of its portfolio. Such is the swirl of rumours that begin whenever one of the houses is up for sale – even though there isn’t an actual vetting process – no property ever ends up in the “wrong hands”.

The island’s second hotel, Firefly, was recently put up for sale and a mysterious financier paid a £1 million deposit, amid rumours he was going to install Taz Fustok, the face who fronts the achingly fashionable West London club Laylow, as an itinerant host. The sale didn’t go through, as the investor apparently got cold feet. While the island could certainly do with some fresh blood, there is a strong sense that it doesn’t want it.

It’s this reluctance to embrace change that has encouraged some to think that perhaps Mustique can be matched by new propositions and that its old-school charm might seem old-fashioned when compared to some shiny, bright competitors. Because there is a lot of competition out there, a lot of eager hands trying to find the pockets of the very rich and the very famous, does Mustique run the risk of being overshadowed by built-for-purpose resorts, such as Richard Branson’s Moskito, which he is building just a few hundred miles away? There are some who think so. Lord Glenconner’s island paradise is still an Oliver Messel dreamscape underneath a *Truman Show* canopy, still an island of conditioned air and bamboo picture frames, of white linen service and hand-delivered

dinner invitations, and yet so much new money wants so much more.

“I’ve had honeymooning couples staying at my house who have got so bored they have gone home after three days or tried to find alternative accommodation,” says a friend who has owned a house on Mustique for more than 20 years. “They just don’t get it. They dress for dinner and then soon realise that they’re the only ones wearing shoes. If you take yourself too seriously here then the regulars just don’t want to know.”

But there are many rich people who like nothing more than dressing for dinner, while the new rich tend to want to parade their wealth, rather than disguising it. And they’re prepared to pay for the privilege of parading it in well-worn luxury playgrounds such as Saint Tropez, Ibiza, Saint Barts, Dubai, Barbados, the Hamptons or Mykonos. Today, resort wars have never been so fierce, nor so guided by celebrity endorsement, whether it’s somewhere such as Milaidhoo Island in the Maldives or a highland camp in Tanzania; whether it’s the Four Seasons in Langkawi or Ca Na Xica in Ibiza, there are now more

Moskito’s hopes of rivalling Mustique were devastated by Hurricane Irma

options than ever before for the fickle Brahmin or HNWI, more places for the international dollar. In the world of infinity pools, Bowflex gyms and celebrity chefs, where service isn’t so much a necessity as a God-given right, competition is rife and brutal. In the Mediterranean in particular, as top-end customers have been migrating from Ibiza and Formentera to resorts in Greece, it’s not tectonic plates that start to shift. It’s the luxury publicists charged with making their clients’ opulent dream palaces seem even more impressive than they really are, ratcheting up their cool through endorsements, marketing and the agency of stealth.

Then, of course, there are the private islands, a model that is largely based upon Richard Branson’s acquisition of Necker Island in 1978, when the former music industry entrepreneur was just 28. It’s a model Branson hasn’t forgotten either. Speak to anyone these days who wants to drop £10m on a plot of land in the Caribbean and they’ll probably tell you they’re thinking of building a home in Moskito, the 125-acre patch of rock and sand in the British Virgin Islands. Branson bought it in 2007 for £10m and has overseen its development into a tropical paradise for entry-level

billionaires. Many of the new residents on Moskito are Silicon Valley tycoons who have been attracted by the island’s promise of exclusivity and the trendy allure of being an early adopter. The island is quickly garnering a reputation for itself, built on promise and vast amounts of new fintech, fashtech and chemtech money. It is new, it is flash and promises the kind of media attention that befits a billionaire playground.

Moskito reflects the changing nature of the jet-set resort, as the new rich seek novelty along with exclusivity. Of course, Branson’s hopes of rivalling Mustique for the attention of the itinerant rich suffered a huge blow when Moskito was devastated by Hurricane Irma two years ago and yet it is now being aggressively marketed as an alternative. Branson initially drew attention to his new acquisition when he announced he was going to create a sanctuary on the island for lemurs, 8,000 miles from their home. He said at the time that he wanted to help conserve the species, as Madagascar, their natural habitat, had been ravaged by political turmoil.

Tech entrepreneur Naveen Jain is building a house on the island and when you look at his CV it’s no surprise. Jain made his initial fortune during the dotcom bubble of the late Nineties, founding the web services company InfoSpace in 1996 and floating it in 1998 for \$75m on the NYSE. After the bubble burst in March 2000, InfoSpace’s stock fell from \$138 per share to \$1.56 over the course of a year. Jain was eventually forced out as CEO and chairman at the end of 2002. He is an enthusiast for commercial space travel, having bought a Virgin Galactic ticket and founded Moon Express in 2010 in an attempt to win a £24m prize offered by Google, awarded to any successful private moon launch made before March 2018. Moon Express failed to meet the target, but still plans to launch in 2020, with the ultimate goal of mining on the moon for commercial resources and eventually founding a human colony. He also founded Bluedot in 2015, a company that sells research conducted by the US Department Of Energy to commercial interests, and Viome in 2016, a health company that provides consumers with gut bacteria analysis and dietary advice.

His house on Moskito is nearly finished. “The hurricane really delayed us by about a year and a half because we got a lot of significant damage from it,” he says. “But we will be ready to enjoy the house in time for Christmas and New Year. So that’s awesome.”

It was Richard Branson who sold Jain on the idea of building a home on Moskito,

personally, in 2014, which was when Jain became tethered to the Virgin king's dream.

"I'm a big space junkie and I was telling Richard, 'Richard, you are so unambitious. You're stuck in the low-earth orbit. Someday you should really be ambitious and go to the moon! Imagine Virgin Moon, right? Go as one, never come back as one!'"

"So anyway, we were at Necker as part of Virgin Galactic and other stuff and I was there with my family. One day he said, 'I love your family, love your kids. Would you consider staying with us at Mosquito? I'm building a house for Sam and for Holly [his daughters] and it would be really nice if your family could join us.' I said, 'Sure, we'll do it.'"

It was on this visit that Branson started talking about the ten lots he was attempting to sell, seeing if Jain wanted one. He was told who was going to buy the other plots and, perhaps surprisingly, Jain approved of all of them. He's also seen what some of the properties are going to look like. "All of the houses are on the same amount of land, same acreage of land," says Jain. "Every one of them is completely unique. Our home is in a very contemporary Mediterranean style, while others are Valley style. Some of them are very different. Ours is flat-roofed, as opposed to those Valley roofs. It will be very special. Buying the land was not the hard part. The hard part was building it, as building a home on an island is extremely expensive. Buying, building and maintaining a house is extremely expensive in this part of the world."

And how much has it cost him?

"I would say, give or take, \$60m plus."

That's a lot of money for a house on an island that's smack bang in the middle of a hurricane path, although this is obviously something that's being played down. "I find it extraordinary that Branson's even attempting to do this," says a former Mustique resident. "I mean, in all honesty, this just looks like a way for him to make enough money to fix the hurricane damage on Necker."

The rise of the private island reflects the way in which a lot of the one per cent are now spending their money. Either they want to party where no one can see them or they want to party where everyone can see them. And there seems to be nothing in between. Canouan appears to be all about the latter. If you had to describe the platonic ideal of a Caribbean island, then it might look something like Canouan. A perfect storm of conditions have combined just 15 miles from Mustique: it has the only lit runway in the southern Grenadines, large and long enough to land a Boeing 737; views over Tobago Cays, Union



From top: Mustique's neighbour Canouan, before and after Mandarin Oriental opened; Necker Island, Richard Branson's first Virgin Islands purchase

Island and Mayreau from the island's southern tip; an 18-hole golf course designed by Jim Fazio (once Trump-branded, but mercifully no longer); and warm surrounding waters full of sea turtles, true to Canouan's name, which means "turtle island" in the Carib language.

There has been a hotel on Canouan since the Nineties, when Swiss-Italian businessman Antonio Saladino founded a 150-suite resort in the north of the island that would ultimately become the Raffles-managed Pink Sands Club. That was torn down and rebuilt on a more manageable scale and eventually taken over by Mandarin Oriental in 2018, the chain's first Caribbean property. Since then, Mandarin Oriental, Canouan has largely dominated hospitality on the island but, with the building of a new £200m marina, interest has been piqued around the world: Aman is set to open a hotel in the next couple of years, Sandy Lane Yacht Club has taken over management of new quayside apartments and villas as part of the marina development and a number of other names have been linked to the island, including as part of a takeover of the Tamarind Beach

Hotel on Canouan's western shore. Not to be outdone, Mandarin Oriental next year plans to break ground on 12 new private stone villas.

The new marina is directly across the road from Canouan's airport and promises to further open the island up to the world. "You have people coming into the marina by yacht and leaving by private jet," says Duarte Correia, who has been general manager of Mandarin Oriental, Canouan since August 2018. "You can actually access the airport through the marina, so it's almost like: out of your jet, into your yacht, sail away." With land donated by the government and finance from Irish billionaire Dermot Desmond, the marina goes hand in hand with a number of other infrastructure improvements on Canouan: fibre optic internet was recently installed, a new secondary school has been built for the 1,800 islanders and a high-end restaurant also funded by Desmond, The Cliff, is set to open shortly.

With such a glut of development, balancing airlift capacity with privacy and exclusivity will be key to the island's future success, Correia suggests. "The idea [of the marina] is to bring more exposure to the island because it truly, truly is an amazing gem." But he's wary of crowding and he's one of a number of Canouan hoteliers who agree that restricting resorts to boutique, smaller brands will preserve the island's charm. "Ultimately, it is an island in the Caribbean; the natural beauty of it is the predominant factor. The last thing we want is to have an island that is overbuilt."

Statements like that, of course, have always been the mantra of Mustique, an island about as interested in modernisation as The Rolling Stones. You wouldn't put a drum machine on a Stones record, so why put a seven-star spa on Mustique? Which is why the Mustique Company island will no doubt have the last laugh, for while the likes of Mosquito and Canouan will start to attract the new one per cent and, of course, all those who come in their wake, it's unlikely they will manage to disrupt the robust gentility of Princess Margaret's former playground. After all, while money these days can buy almost anything, it still doesn't buy class. **GQ**

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Jacket, £1,500. Shirt, £490. Both by **Gucci**.
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Crown

This month sees the return of Netflix's headline-grabbing family saga *The Crown* and the school-age Charles of the last series is now the most eligible bachelor of the Sixties and Seventies. To get under the skin and inside the mind of the guarded playboy prince, actor Josh O'Connor drew on movement coaches and detailed dossiers. Oh, and an astonishing quantity of boiled eggs. Here, the award-winning star shares his own insight on the depths and desires of the man who will be king

Suit, £2,650. Shirt, £365. Both by **Dolce & Gabbana**. dolcegabbana.com. Tie by **Gieves & Hawkes**, £115. gievesandhawkes.com. Shoes by **Russell & Bromley**, £275. russellandbromley.co.uk. Pocket square by **Marks & Spencer**, £15. marksandspencer.com



prince

Story by **Alex Godfrey**

Photographs by **Meinke Klein**

Styling by **Luke Day**

U

Josh O'Connor was 18 and agog when he first saw Paul Thomas Anderson's *There Will Be Blood*. After the near-wordless opening 20 minutes, in which Daniel Day-Lewis chisels, saws and grunts in the pits, O'Connor, thrilled that cinema could feel so real, went back to the start to watch those 20 minutes again. And then again, and again, and again. The film had a permanent impact on him, as did Day-Lewis, who had mastered prospecting for the film. For 2017 drama *God's Own Country*, O'Connor trained on a farm, delivered lambs and ended up in hospital. He'll do whatever it takes.

And sometimes, it seems, when it comes to playing a young Prince Charles in the new series of Netflix's *The Crown*, it takes eggs.

"What would you write that makes good headlines?" O'Connor wonders in his trailer, taking a break from filming *The Crown* at Greenwich's Old Royal Naval College. "Josh ate boiled eggs for months. I am eating quite a lot of them, because that's what Charles does. He eats a lot of boiled eggs."

It's December 2018 and O'Connor, 29, is a few weeks in to playing the Prince Of Wales. He's been acting for the screen since 2012, but his rise to royalty accelerated over the past couple of years. He'd had bit parts on television via *Peaky Blinders* and *The Durrells* and in cinema with the likes of *The Riot Club* and *Florence Foster*

Jenkins, but he may as well have come from nowhere when *God's Own Country* was released. As nihilistic young farmer Johnny Saxby, struggling to express himself with anything other than coarse drunkenness and angry sex, O'Connor's portrayal of his journey towards emotional warmth with another man was disarmingly, deceptively authentic. Many assumed he and Johnny were one and the same, including, initially, the film's director, Francis Lee. (O'Connor auditioned for the part via a video audition and because he felt it was "terrible" he sent it without including the customary introduction, so, he says, "Francis didn't hear my [real] voice.")

Since *God's Own Country*, he's provided an emotionally wrought Marius for the BBC's production of *Les Misérables*, played a young man struggling with a relationship in this summer's naturalistic romantic drama *Only You* and, from what *GQ* has seen of *The Crown*'s new series, is an uncanny – and very human – Charles. Researching and preparing for months, O'Connor finally locked on to an entry point.

"What I'm gradually finding," he says, "is a guy waiting for his mother to die for his life to have meaning. His whole life has been in purgatory. Waiting for your parent to die is pretty messed up. That the one person who should be unconditional is the person that holds the power for you to have any meaning in your life... it's quite nice to play that. They're huge stakes."

A sequence in series three provided the key. "It's my favourite scene in the series," he says. "Charles refers to Saul Bellow's [1944 novel] *Dangling Man*, in which there's a character from Chicago waiting to be drafted to go to

war. He wants to go to war, to certain death, because it will give his life meaning. Until then, he's just waiting. And that perspective, to me, seems to be the most profound thing for Charles." Meanwhile, he says, there are smaller stakes no less pertinent to Charles' psychology. "All he really wants is a hug from his mother," he says of the downtrodden prince. "He just wants to be told he's doing all right."

Having never so much as ridden a horse previously, he perfected Charles' idiosyncratic polo technique. "Charles holds the reins in a different way," he says, demonstrating with his hands. "Most people have four reins here, then thumb on top. He puts the reins in between each finger. So I learnt that as well. I love that."

He worked with movement director Polly Bennett to get Charles' physicality down. "Royals are always very clear about where they're moving, because they've been told by protection officers exactly what they're doing," he says. "Whenever Charles gets out of a car he checks his cufflink, checks his pocket and then waves, the same movement, every time."

That routine, though, says O'Connor, means that it's been hard to witness Charles unrehearsed, unchoreographed. The recent BBC documentary *Prince, Son And Heir: Charles At 70*, he says, was a gold mine. "There are a couple of moments when Camilla says >>



Josh O'Connor won Best Actor at the British Independent Film Awards for *God's Own Country*

Jacket, £1,700. Waistcoat, £625. Shirt, £365. Trousers, £675. All by **Dolce & Gabbana**. dolcegabbana.com. Tie by **Edward Sexton**, £110. edwardsexton.co.uk. Shoes by **Russell & Bromley**, £255. russellandbromley.co.uk. Pocket square by **Marks & Spencer**, £15. marksandspencer.com



‘I’m eating quite a lot of boiled eggs, because that’s what Charles does’

Josh O'Connor in *The Crown* and the real Prince Of Wales in the colours of Windsor's Guards Polo Club. Charles, pictured here in 1977, inherited his enthusiasm for the sport from his father and great-uncle and mentor Lord Mountbatten. He's described it as his one great extravagance

'Whenever Charles gets out of a car he checks his cufflink and pocket. It's the same movement every time'





>> something and he's not expecting it and you see a kind of banter or sometimes an annoyance, like: 'It's my time to be in the spotlight.' Moments like that are really brilliant. Something where you can go, 'Oh, that's the embarrassed Charles.'"

On set, I watch O'Connor work. At the end of a long, low-lit table, his Charles, in a Royal Navy jumper, is dining with Charles Dance's uniformed Lord Mountbatten, the Prince's great-uncle and mentor. This is the early Seventies, with Greenwich doubling for Dartmouth Naval College, where Charles had an unhappy time. He looks particularly miserable now, pining for Camilla Shand, who was then courting Andrew Parker Bowles. "She's the one," says O'Connor, picking at his food, looking dejected. He looks like Charles, sounds like Charles, but isn't the public, well-oiled Charles we're used to. He seems broken. Should they find themselves watching, even the staunchest antimonarchists might melt.

On a rainy morning at the end of July, the ever-unassuming O'Connor, in a T-shirt and jeans, walks into Mario's Café, a greasy spoon treasure off North London's Kentish Town Road. Amid the ketchup and chilli sauce, no trace of Charles remains. Since filming series three he's starred in a new feature adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma* (as Mr Elton) and experienced a spiritual rebirth in the sea. Finally taking time off this summer after having back-to-back jobs for three years, he was at a loss.

"I work in an industry in which we're all quite vulnerable, I think, to mental health," he says. "I was tearing my hair out. I didn't know what to do and it probably wasn't great for my mental health. It made me a bit insecure."

To combat what he was feeling, he fled, finding sanctuary in a place he used to go to as a child, on the Hampshire coast. "One morning I just got in my car and drove there. I got to the beach, ran into the sea – it was freezing cold – and just lay there. When I got out, I felt like a new man. It was like a weird baptism."

Inspired by this, he's recently begun swimming in and around the UK, in lidos, lakes, ponds and pools, raising money for the mental health charity Mind. He's planning to complete 30 swims, to mark the 30th year of his life. Six of them will be in Scotland, where he'll be filming much of *The Crown's* fourth series.

He's had a break from Charles, but is back at it now and has brought him on

somewhat. If the forthcoming series three has Charles as an outsider, says O'Connor, feeling like he's not a part of his own family, series four, which covers the Diana years and is expected in 2020, will have him coming into his own: "There's a bit of a drive about him."

On every job he creates books for the character, filling them with sensory stimulants – anything that might bring the person to life. They serve as "guidebooks, memory banks. In a scene when I want to get to a certain place I'll look at the book and take it in." His one for Charles is the most professional yet ("really slick"). There are cloth samples from suits Charles has worn and some incense from Latin mass, which O'Connor thinks "smells grand and holy" and possibly like public school – the younger Charles had a terrible time at Gordonstoun and is still smarting from it when we rejoin him in series three.

His books from other jobs are more like scrapbooks: "Proper messy. *God's Own Country* is one I really went to town on. There's some manure in there, bale twine..." Hang on a second. Manure? As in... actual manure. "Yeah. Seriously. I still have it."

'That's the stuff you want to seek out: what can we find to humanise Charles'

It's not disgusting at all. It's very good, very nutritious."

He had no qualms about getting his hands dirty on that film. For two weeks before shooting, Lee had O'Connor work alongside a farmer on a farm, up at six every day for sheep-tending, fence-fixing and lamb-delivering. The footage of him with his arm up a cow's backside involved no trickery. Four weeks into filming he ended up in hospital, on a drip, with an infection, probably due to not washing his hands too often, in line with the farmer's own sanitary quirks. By the end of the shoot he'd lost three stone.

All that diligence paid off as O'Connor was nominated for a Bafta for his performance and won a British Independent Film Award for Best Actor. "I think you have to approach characters as 'What is the human intention in this?'" he says, and the same is true of Charles: O'Connor's take is as deep a dive as any of his other roles. Possibly the deepest, no matter how many eggs he has to eat.

Royal treatments

Series three sees a changing of the guard among the cast of *The Crown*



HM The Queen



Olivia Colman



HRH Prince Philip



Tobias Menzies



Lord Snowdon



Ben Daniels



HRH Princess Margaret



Helena Bonham Carter

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THE CROWN SERIES THREE IS ON NETFLIX FROM 17 NOVEMBER.

‘One morning
I just got in
my car, drove
to the beach
and ran into
the sea. It was
freezing
cold and I
just lay there’

THE CROWN

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Grooming **Lesley Vye**
using **Boy De Chanel** and
Chanel Le Lift Serum
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‘All Charles wants is a
hug from his mother.
He wants to be told
he’s doing all right’

A.M.



From wheels down at Narita International to volume up at Karaoke Kan, GQ hit Tokyo by day in colour-clash trainers, then switched to salaryman-smart as the land of the rising sun went down

Photographs by **Piczo** Styling by **Angelo Mitakos**

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FASHION

P.M.



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IG: @KUDOKE_WATCHES



13.

1. Nite is a British watch brand born from a spirit of independence. With Tritium illumination, ceramic bezel insert, sapphire crystal and a Swiss Made movement you can rely on the Alpha whatever challenge you set yourself. Life shouldn't be a compromise – and neither should your watch. **2. The Meia Lua** brand was born in Lisbon. Their designs are a combination of several different elements, from various ages and constellations, the moon in particular plays a very influential part in their brand. Their aim is to deliver exclusive, high quality pieces that are built with high grade materials, meeting the modern standards of the industry. Meia Lua watches intends to bring you something unique. **3. Gova Watches** offer beautiful eco-friendly and handcrafted wooden accessories. Their classic but bold styles provide great options for a watch. Gova – where fashion and nature collide. Visit govawatches.com **4. Crann** is an Irish fashion brand. They use sustainable and recycled materials. Handcrafted to help you stand out of the crowd. Visit Crann.co for more. **5. Designa Individual Watches** provides exclusive customisation services to high-end luxury timepieces. Rolex Daytona Speedster is crafted in super light high-end Carbon fiber. The highly anticipated Daytona weighs less than 50 grams which converts this piece into an exquisite watch-collecting dream piece. Limited to 10 pieces. **6. Valpin** was born out of the partnership of two watchmaking enthusiasts. Their aim being to produce limited series watch models with high quality complications. Pictured is the LR03. This model combines sobriety and elegance. Composed of a movement that incorporates a second-time zone and a retrograde date. Check them out to see more of their sophisticated range. **7. The NOVE** Streamliner functions as a luxury and classy watch for almost any occasion. Perfectly subtle for a dinner party or banquet and equally eye catching for everyday use. **8. Yearning.W** //First Edition//Silver, also available in rose gold black racing leather easy-strap which is also available in Brown and Houndstooth pattern fabric. Belgian Brand and Design. Gentlemen-style. Designed By A. Van Mullem. Look at their Facebook page @Yearningw for more information. **9.** Inspired by their fascination of time and the machines that represent its irrevocable essence, **Sovrygn** was developed. Designed from high-quality steel and other exotic materials, the Imperial collection shows the fine nature of luxurious timepieces. **10. Pompeak** A new business with big ideas. Their first chronograph quartz timepiece is minimalist by design but full of features; water resistant up to 50m (5ATM), scratch-resistant sapphire glass and a surgical grade stainless steel casing means you can wear this watch all day, every day. **11. Habib London.** Contemporary menswear brand Habib London, offers the ultimate range of modern accessories for the suave and on-trend man. The range of card holders, matching phone cases and watches are perfect additions to any look. With a focus on luxury, they offer statement pieces for the statement man. Shop online, with their exclusive 10% off discount code: GQ10 (expires 01/12/19). **12. RVLVR** is a brand which was formed out of inspiration from the classic handgun, the revolver. Like the legendary weapon, their mission was to make a watch that was simple, precise, and built to last. Combining their love of the two, they have succeeded in creating the ultimate, affordable badass watch. A watch that is unique, beautiful, and inspiring at the same time. **13. Kudoke** combines traditional watchmaking skills and the power of imagination to create ticking pieces of art. Only 50 pieces per year are manufactured in the small atelier of German independent watchmaker Stefan Kudoke. Handcraft for him is not just a phrase, but a philosophy.

The Fashion Collection...



1
GRAFFITI BLACK
OVERSIZED TEE £25
GIUNGLA AMORE
GIUNGLAAMORE.COM
IG: @GIUNGLA_AMORE



2
MADE TO MEASURE
ITALIAN SHIRTS £95
FITTED
WWW.FITTED.ONLINE
IG: @FITTED.ONLINE



3
CHESTER - HORN £59.99
CHESTER - BLACK - £59.99
GIGS EYEWEAR
GIGSEYEWEAR.COM
IG: @GIGS



4
GLOBAL WARMING HOODIE
RAVE CLOTHING
RAVECLOTHING.STORE
IG: @RAVECLOTHINGBRAND



5
HEX LDN LOS PATCH HAT GREY £34.99
HUBB & WILLS
HUBBANDWILLS.COM
IG: @HUBBANDWILLS



6
MANHATTAN CLASSIC £79
HENTLEY
HENTLEY.CO
IG: @HENTLEYORIGINAL



7
ESSENTIAL SNEAKERS - WHITE £125
ARTISAN LAB
ARTISAN-LAB.COM
IG: @ARTISANLAB_OFFICIAL



8
TERROR TALES
TERRORTALESCLOTHING.COM
IG: @TERRORTALEUSA



9
DXC SUEDE TRUCKER RED £39.99
DESIGN BY CRIME
DESIGNBYCRIME.CO.UK
IG: @DXC_CLOTHING



10
SIGNET RING BLUE MARBLE
FROM €90
SPREZZI FASHION
SPREZZI-FASHION.COM
IG: @SPREZZIFASHION



11
NAVY HOODIE £30
RYNO CLOTHING
RYNOCLOTHING.CO.UK
IG: @RYNOCLOTHINGUK



12
S619 ASTRO £140
7TH HVN
7THHVN.COM



13
'HOW MUCH? - YES' T-SHIRT €34
THE GENTLESHRIMP
THEGENTLESHRIMP.COM
IG: @THEGENTLESHRIMP

1. Giungla Amore is one of GQ's top picks for The Fashion Collection. This New British clothing line has perfected their range with originality and high-quality designs. The perfect brand for young professionals. Visit them giunglaamore.com and follow them on IG: @giungla_amore **2. FITTED** provides an exclusively online bespoke service to bring you the best fitting shirts around. Using an advanced algorithm to predict your measurements, this new innovative brand serves as your electronic, on-demand tailor at the click of a button. Convenient quality, made uniquely for you. Use code GQ20 to receive 20% off (expires 01/02/2020). **3. Gigs Eyewear.** Sunglasses to help our planet, Italian inspired, British design, made with biodegradable materials provided by the famous Mazzuchelli 1849 and a lens that offers complete protection – polarised, 100% UVA/UVB and blue light filtering. **4. RAVE Clothing** is changing the face of the streetwear scene through their unique and stylish product range. If you're looking for a innovative brand with a sophisticated edge then be sure to check them out! **5. Hubb and Wills** is a contemporary brand that produces premium hats for the fashion forward clientele. Sourced in Europe, they exclusively select top quality materials for their products. Superior fabric and adjustable fit with a back mesh to complement everyday style. Feel the love, in their hat! **6. Hentley** is an independent Australian studio, crafting simplified leather goods that are made to last. Their mission is to craft an item that has serious longevity and timeless aesthetics. As well as their classic wallet collection, they have iPhone cases and iPhone wallets. **7.** From the most sought-after Italian artisans of luxury, **Artisan Lab** brings to you in limited batches beautifully designed handmade products, made to last and age gracefully. **8. Terror Tales**, the contemporary clothing brand, takes pride in offering high quality streetwear products. Their edgy, unique slogans and designs are for fashion forward and bold. If you want to make a statement then check them out! **9. Design By Crime** offers an effortlessly stylish range to the modern man. With clean cut lines and laid back styles, this brand's premium streetwear will take you wherever you need to go, whilst always looking your best. **10.** Launched in 2016, **Sprezzi Fashion** is a young German brand creating trendsetting silver jewellery. Their one and only mission is to take your outfit to the next level, without breaking the bank. Use code 'GQ19' for 15% off (expires 06/12/2019). **11. Ryno Clothing** is a Liverpool based Clothing brand specialising in the classic casual look. Stand out from the crowd in one of our embroidered hoodies, available in 3 colours and made from 100% combed organic cotton. **12. 7THHVN** staples merge contemporary high fashion with relaxed urban styling. Cut from stretch-denim for guaranteed comfort, the OG jeans are treated to a faded wash with paint splatters and distressed detailing for a vintage-inspired aesthetic. **13. The Gentleshrimp** is a unisex clothing brand for charming rebels around the world with a fine sense of humour. Classic fit with a thick cotton fabric. Find more smooth statements like this 'HOW MUCH? - YES' t-shirt on thegentleshrimp.com

The Fashion Collection... Continued

14



**"MADE FOR THE ARCHIVES"
T-SHIRT £150**
GOSSE AU CŒUR
GOSSEAUCEUR.COM
IG: @GOSSEAUCEUR

15



SHIRT - NWDF €89
ROUGH.
ROUGHOFFICIAL.COM
IG: @ROUGH.OFF

16



**CHRISTOPHER CLOOS
MALA CHAMPAGNE £129**
CHRISTOPHER-CLOOS.COM
IG: @CHRISTOPHERCLOOS

17



**BEDLAM SUPER 130'S MID
BLUE GLEN CHECK £1200**
ADAM JAMES BESPOKE
ADAMJAMESBESPOKE.COM
IG: @ADAMJAMESBESPOKE

18



**LONG SLEEVE (BLACK)
PAAQ**
WWW.PAAQ.CO
IG: @PAAQ.CO

19



JEHU EXOTIC JODHPUR BOOT £695
JACOB TAYLOR
JACOB TAYLORDESIGN.COM
IG: @JACOB TAYLORMAN

20



NARCO CAP BLACK AND YELLOW
NARCO CLOTHING
NARCO CLOTHING.COM
IG: @NARCO CLOTHINGOFFICIAL

22



BURGUNDY CAMOUFLAGE PRINT BLAZER
SARAN KOHLI
SARANKOHLI.COM
IG: @SARANKOHLILABEL

21



**SUNGLASS ANDY IN WHISKEY
SALT.**
SALTOPTICS.COM
IG: @SALTOPTICS

23



**'CREATURE IN THE UNIVERSE'
WHITE HOODIE \$75**
UNTOLD BRAND
UNTOLDTZBRAND.WIXSITE.COM
IG: @UNTOLDTZ

24



SAND SUEDE TRUCKER £35.99
PART OF THE 'LUXE
COLLECTION' COMING SOON
BANDIT GOLF APPAREL
BANDITGOLFAPPAREL.COM
IG: @BANDITGOLFAPPAREL

25



SCARFACE LOGO T-SHIRT £40
VFOUR
VFOURLDN.COM
IG: @VFOUR.GRAM

26



**RETROKAIKOS SAGE STRIPE
SWIM TRUNKS \$98**
OKAIKOS.COM
IG: @OKAIKOS

27



DARK OAK HOLDALL £750
MORGAN LEATHER
MORGANLEATHER.CO.UK
IG: @UKMORGANLEATHER

14. GOSSE au CŒUR. French for 'kid at heart' is a design venture by British-born designer Benjamin Kyei. Showcasing ready-to-wear collections, the brand focuses on blending streetwear style and modern high fashion sensibilities. **15. Rough.** is a premium streetwear brand that blurs the lines between high quality fashion and everyday style. Their products are synonymous with functionality, edge and sophistication. **16. Christopher Cloos.** Timeless retro unisex frame with a more rectangular shape. Another durable, top quality frame for those who value great quality and refuse to compromise their look. Just like its sibling, The Paloma, it comes with polarized lenses to block UV and protect your eyes. Together with the premium acetate and spring hinges, this frame is made to measure for everyone. **17. Adam James Bespoke.** This super 130's English worsted elegant 3 piece, has a great character and features. The beautiful blue and green check in well complimented with a racing green lining inside the jacket and on the back on the double breasted shawl lapel waistcoat. The soft shoulder head and slim lapel have a real Italian look about it, whilst the fit of the jacket has a slick silhouette. **18. paaq** is a progressive design project intended to share the stories of South Asia. paaq came onto the scene last year with this shirt and garnered a lot of attention. They are releasing it again in celebration of their 1 year anniversary. **19. Jacob Taylor** presents the JEHU. The use of genuine python skin makes it not only a statement piece, it's the entire conversation. Made-To-Order. Doorstep delivery in under four weeks. **20. Narco Clothing** is the clothing brand creating luxury caps with fresh designs. Their goal is to bring new designs you can look forward to, from limited edition runs to the highest quality range of colours and styles to match any outfit. **21. Salt.** is a premium eyewear brand from coastal California that is committed to quality construction and timeless design inspired by effortless beauty. Their products emulate a classic model while remaining relevant through its simple form. All their designs are unique in styling and weight to ensure the product is tailored to you. To see more of their fabulous collection, check out their website! **22. Saran Kohli** - An intricate take on eveningwear from suits, tuxedos to concept collections fused with embroideries and off-balanced cuts to create global inspired ensembles. JLS, Jay Sean, Ashley Walters, Lenny Henry, Sachin Tendulkar, and Big Narstie to name a few. **23. UNTOLD** focus on the quality of their products to bring maximum satisfaction to their costumers. Untold was born from the idea that our generation is different. Since we are increasingly aware of the global problems from an early age, they believe that we are meant to change that and to be different. Because people can praise being different, disagree with it, glorify or vilify it but about the only thing you can't do is ignore it. Because we (the different) change things. **24. Bandit Golf Apparel.** Look good on and off the golf course with a range of Trucker and SnapBacks to Peaky Blinders style Flat Hats. **25. VFOUR** is a brand that offers it's hybrid streetwear to the creatives who live in timeless style. The brand is deeply rooted in today's art & culture. You can find them at vfourldn.com **26. Make a statement in these custom RetroKAIKOS** teal stripe athletic fit 7" inseam swim trunks. Crafted from moisture wicking, stretch, performance fabrics, their trunks provide optimal movement and are perfect for beach activities or lounging. They ship worldwide. **27. Tony Morgan** creates naturally beautiful bags and functional accessories from British and European leather. All from his small workshop in North West England. Sustainable and planet-friendly - the way of the future, learnt from the traditions of the past. Contact him for bespoke work.



28. BLACK AND GOLD FLORAL PAISLEY TWO PIECE DINNER TUXEDO \$800
HENRY COUTURE PARIS
HCPARIS.COM
IG: @HENRYCOUTUREPARIS



29. STORM TROOPER CAMO BOOT £230
DUKE + DEXTER
DUKEANDDEXTER.COM
IG: @DUKEDEXTER



30. THE BARRY WEEKENDER BAG €895
GERARD PIERRE
GERARDPIERRE.EU
IG: @GERARD_PIERRE_VIP



31. THE 'LEGACY' POLO SHIRT £155
WWW.BYINVITATION.LONDON
IG: @GENTLMAN.FRATERNITY



32. THE ARCADIA COLLECTION £70
WHITE THREADS
WHITETHREADS.CO.UK
IG: @WHITETHREADSUK



33. TEMPLE RASH GUARD €49.90
DOKEBI COMBAT OUTFITTERS
DOKEBICOMBAT.COM
IG: @DOKEBICOMBAT



34. SNEAKER BAG
SOLEPACK
THESOLEPACK.COM
IG: @SOLEPACK



35. LEATHER BUSINESS BAG £280
T.T.DALK
WWW.TTDALK.NG
IG: @TTDALK

36. BLACK SLOGAN CAP
VENECII
VENECIILONDON.COM
IG: @VENECII



37. WANDERSTERN PRINT T-SHIRT £80
JEN MM DESIGN
JENMMDESIGN.JIMDO.COM
IG: @JEN_MM_



38. MINIMALIST BOOTS
EQUILIBRIUM £345
LOCO ONE URBAN WEAR
LOCOONE.COM
IG: @LOCOONEOFFICIAL



39. A.S.20 X 70 SIX (WHITE) COLLAB J.M. LIMITED EDITION - 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY £40
AEROSOUL.CO.UK
IG: @AEROSOUL_LIMITED



40. KIRANKOY \$379
REGULAR SUIT
REGULARSUIT.COM
IG: @REGULARSUIT



41. SWEATSHIRT 'BERLIN' €70
VAAD
VAADTHELABEL.COM
IG: @V_A_A_D_

28. Whatever the occasion, **Henry Couture Paris** is the place for beautiful suits with custom tailoring and accessories. They provide you with maximum level of confidence and comfort in every suit. Pictured is a suit from the Black Label Collection. They include a fully framed classic black lining with red piping highlights to give you a versatile look. **29. Duke + Dexter** is the most exciting, talked about and disruptive men's London footwear label. Worn by the likes of Ryan Reynolds, Justin Timberlake and Jonah Hill. Designed in London | Handmade in England | Sustainably sourced materials. **30. Gerard Pierre.** It is this challenge that makes you irresistible. The audacity that makes you bold, and you need the right possessions. Whether you are headed out for a quick weekend getaway or an unexpected business trip, having the right travelling bag makes all the difference. **31. The Fraternity & Co** believe they have created the modern Gentleman's polo du jour. Old-world luxury, new world savoir faire. Featuring 2 distinct gilt buttons, that will come to define the modern Gentleman, fraternity and a Gentleman's Quality of Life. **32.** An exciting new collection by **White Threads**. Available on select garments. The Arcadia Collection boasts bright colours and smart layouts, a perfect piece to bring your outfit to life this Winter. Find more from this Exclusive brand online. **33. Dokebi** is a premium martial arts and sports lifestyle brand offering an assortment of innovative products. Dokebi's training rash guards are unique with their blend of polyester/ spandex and mesh underarm panels for added ventilation. This moisture-wicking, form-fitting clothing can be worn for all types of training and also as temperature regulating underwear for all seasons. Use code GQ2019 for 15% off (expires 01/01/2020). **34. SOLEPACK** is the premier sneaker bag co. Patented designs pack your trainers like never before. The detachable carriers make this the most versatile shoe carrying system around. Great for daily commutes or extended getaways. A perfect blend of fashion & function. **35. T.T.DALK** is a premium brand where simplicity, elegance and style converge to form a perfect product, built with a fashion conscious intelligence on the current trends in leather accessories, footwear, apparel and crafts. **36. Venecii** is a London streetwear fashion brand with a passion to giving back to the community. Inspired by the troubled lives of the youth today, Venecii has made a quest to change the lives of young people and give them a chance to chase their dreams without losing themselves or their focus. To support a brand that is 'Connecting the world through fashion' be sure to check them out! **37. JEN MM DSGN** represents unique urbanwear for men and woman, designed and handmade by fashion designer Jennifer Moica. The slightly washed-out, screen printed WANDERSTERN T-Shirt with graffiti elements is inspired by a future voyage to a new world of possibilities. **38.** The new hit Canadian brand **LOCO ONE** brings to Europe its exclusive minimalist design, Boots Equilibrium. Totally handmade of genuine leather, back zipper, rubber soles glued and stitched. Take advantage of their worldwide free shipping. **39. Aerosoul Limited** is a Lifestyle heritage streetwear brand born from the roots of the 90's UK cultural raving music scene that still continues today! The brand centres around Jungle, Drum and Bass, Hip Hop, Soul and Breakbeat Music. Aerosoul recently dropped a collaborative collection consisting of a skate deck, Art Print and T-shirt, with heritage UK skate brand Insane Emporium, featuring graphics from Artist GED Wells. **40. Regular Suit** is a luxury brand that has succeeded in making unique and high quality products for their customers. If you are looking for a brand with an elegant and refined edge then be sure to check them out. **41. VAAD Berlin** based sustainable street wear label. Limited pieces for people who pay attention to details. New exclusive collection named "life" inspired by Japanese art. It will be your timeless follower on the street.

The Fashion Collection... Continued



42
BART BROGUE
NAKFASHION.COM
IG: @NAKFASHION



43
STUDIO I TITANIUM GLASSES
JOSH FANO
JOSHFANO.COM
IG: @JOSHFANOSTUDIO



44
SKULL SERIES II (YG RED) £83
KWEISMENN.COM
IG: @KWEISMENN



45
KEYCHAIN NECKLACE £350
LOGO NECKLACE £550
DOUBLE HOOP RING £450
ETIKKJEWELRY.COM
IG: @ETIKKJEWELRY



46
MAURO S \$79.97
MAN-IQUE.COM
IG: @MAN_IQUE



49
GOODIE BAG (ARMY GREEN) \$25
WOAH
WOAHCO.COM
IG: @WOAH.COM



47
ICE GREY SUEDE £34.99
GOD GIVEN TALENT
WWW.GODGIVENTALENT.FIT
IG: @GODGIVENTALENT.FIT



48
HOODY WITH POCKET €64.90
M.J.GONZALES
MJGONZALES.DE
IG: @M.J.GONZALES



50
HAND-STITCHED BELT €249
NOCKSTEIN
NOCKSTEIN.COM
IG: @NOCKSTEIN_SALZBURG



51
SWEATER 'CALIFORNIA' €129.99
CHICCHERIA BRAND
CHICCHERIABRAND.COM
IG: @CHICCHERIABRAND



52
JACK DAVISON CLASSIC NAVY
SUIT FROM £975
JACK-DAVISON.CO.UK
IG: @JACK_DAVISON_BESPOKE



53
BOXER BRIEF £18
FJORD
WEARFJORD.COM
IG: @FJORD



54
REFLECTIVE BLOCK LOGO
FITTED T-SHIRT
JLABEL.CO
IG: @J.LABELCLOTHING



55
CHECKED HISTORIAN COAT £1,100
ALEXANDRAWOODBESPOKE.CO.UK
IG: @ALEXANDRAWOODMENSWEAR

42. NAK Fashion is a luxury animal-friendly shoe brand for vibrant men and women looking for a cruelty-free alternative, which is 100% made in Italy. The Bart Brogue shoe is the elegant shoe with a super comfortable fit. Shop your cruelty-free pair on their website. **43. Josh Fano Eyewear's** studio collection aims to mediate poetry between contemporary architectural movements and postmodern design. The Studio Collection takes design influence from the Bridge of Aspiration at the Royal Ballet School in London. For every ten pairs of glasses sold through its selected retailers, Josh Fano funds one sight-saving cataract surgery in partnership with international charity Sightsavers. **44. K.Weismenn™ Luxury.** Handcrafted Luxury Bracelets made with the highest quality natural gemstones, the model featured here is one of their best sellers, the "Skull Series II". **45. ETIKK JEWELRY** is an ethically responsible brand that supports mining communities and respects the environment. Every piece of jewellery is UK made and responsibly mined in Peru using Fairmined® Sterling Silver and Gold and ethically sourced gemstones. Most designs are unisex with the option of custom made designs for clients in Yellow, Pink or White Gold from 9KT to 18KT as well as in 925 Sterling Silver, while respecting the brand's identity. **46. Man-ique** offers hand-crafted pieces to add that extra bit of flair that will push you to the top. Their jewellery items are the perfect accessory to complete your look. Visit their website for more information. **47. God Given Talent's** beautiful 100% grey suede mesh hat. With silk lining for front panel protection and polyester side and rear panelling, this premium headwear piece is the perfect addition to every wardrobe. The hat is finished off with an all sky blue God Given Talent logo and retro style snap back adjuster. **48. M.J.Gonzales** is a young upcoming designer-streetwear brand, specialised for retro looking & trendy men fashion. **49. WOAH** is a premium streetwear brand that embraces high quality products at affordable prices. If you are after a stylish, functional wardrobe with a sophisticated edge then be sure to check this brand out. **50.** In a time which is dominated by apps and voice controlled devices, **Nockstein** takes a more traditional way. The Austrian based manufacturer combines solid handcrafting with modern laser and CNC techniques to create high level leather accessories and handbags that last a lifetime. **51. Chiccheria Brand** stands for luxurious and cool streetwear fashion, accessories and leather goods. Inspired by the lifestyle of southern California beach communities and the glam look of West Coast Metropolis Los Angeles, combined with the inimitable elegance and quality of Italian tailoring. **52. Jack Davison** offer the finest bespoke and made to measure tailoring. Bringing the flair of Mayfair to the City, whilst challenging the traditions of Savile row with contemporary cuts and keen eye for fabrics. Visit their website to make an appointment at their central London atelier. **53.** Get on with your life without worrying about your underwear. **Fjord** have created the only underwear you'll ever need for every occasion. From the office to the gym, it's all about comfort, practicality and quality. The longer length endures all scenarios throughout the day, staying put all the while. Visit wearfjord.com for more. **54. J. Label** is an up and coming streetwear brand based in the UK. With apparel for both men and women their collection has something for everyone. Their sizes range from XS-XXXL and their products are handmade in the UK. They ship worldwide. **55. At Alexandra Wood** they create fresh, modern menswear and tailoring to bring you the perfect balance between work and play. They only use the finest quality fabrics with a flattering cut. Alongside their ready to wear collections, they also offer made to measure tailoring.



56. MILK ARC LOGO CAP £29.99
MILKGLOBAL.NET
IG: @MILKGLOBAL



57. SILVER CONNECTIONS RING £125
WESTHILL
WESTHILL-STORE.COM
IG: @WESTHILL_AUSTRALIA



58. CARBON FIBER WALLET €170
COLD FIRE
COLD FIRE BRAND.COM
IG: @COLD FIRE BRAND



59. BESPOKE BLACK TIE TUXEDO & CUSTOMISED WHITE GOLD PLATED INITIAL PIN
GENTLE RAMS
HOUSEOFRAMS.COM
IG: @GENTLE_RAMS



60. CLASSIC FIT T-SHIRT £24.99
HMG CLOTHING
HMG-CLOTHING.COM
IG: @HMG_CLOTHING



61. BLACK BOXER TRUNK £20
ARLO HUDSON
ARLOHUDSON.COM



62. BUTTERSCOTCH PS DOT SWEATSHIRT
POP SAVVEE
POPSAVVEE.COM
IG: @POPSAVVEE



63. HELLCAT BACKPACK £150
AVIATION88
AVIATION88.CO.UK
IG: @BRANDAVIATION88



65. HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER TEE
SUBLIMINAL TEES
SUBLIMINALTEES.COM
IG: @SBLMNLTEES



66. STONE GREY HOODIE £75
AVIAIRE CLOTHING
AVIAIRE-CLOTHING.COM
IG: @AVIAIRECLOTHING



64. STREET ART APPAREL TRIBE ALL
ANGELATHOULESS.COM
IG: @TRIBE_ALL_TEE



67. CLEAN 90 SNEAKER £180
AXEL ARIGATO
WWW.AXELARIGATO.COM
IG: @AXELARIGATO



68. 3A LUMBER CARDIGAN IN WINE
INVERALLAN
INVERALLANKNITTERS.COM
IG: @INVERALLANKNITTERSLTD



69. SHARK ATTACK PORTOFINO SHORTS £165
300 SPECIES - ITALIAN CRAFTED, AUSSIE INSPIRED
WWW.300SPECIES.COM
IG: @300SPECIES

56. Milk Global is the brand new name in streetwear fashion. Why Milk? Milk is something that looks too good for words, a slang word for fly, but more intense. It originated on the streets of New York City in the early 00's. View the full headwear collection over at milkglobal.net **57. Westhill** is an Australian-based lifestyle brand creating timeless pieces for the conscious consumer. Their meticulous approach to simplicity provides a platform to showcase some of nature's finest materials. The Connections ring is made in Australia from sterling silver and can be tumbled for a textured matte finish, or polished for a more classic look. **58. COLD FIRE** presents a high-tech tactical Bifold Men's RFID Wallet featuring genuine kangaroo leather, Carbitex CX6 Carbon Fibre and Dyneema reinforced lining, perfectly blended to deliver strength and protection in an ultra-slim package. The sleek design is complemented with a signature Titanium logo plate. Shop online at coldfirebrand.com and follow on IG @coldfirebrand **59. With Gentle RAMS**, it's a new experience of having a personal stylist. Meet the one-stop suit and styling service that does not only tailor your suits but also creates customised total look for you with their own signature handcrafted accessories: customised initial pin, cufflinks, pocket squares, bow ties, neck-ties right down to the shoes. Featured is a modern twist on the Black Tie Tuxedo with contrasting textures of worsted wool and silk. Extra-wide black peak lapels and folded cuffs with ridged texture add subtle yet impactful details on the black and white jacquard suit. RAMS white pleated pocket square, oversized velvet bow tie and customised initial lapel pin bathed in white gold complete this bold look. **60. HMG Clothing** is a British clothing company created to remember those who sacrificed their lives for our country. Their range of artwork is inspired, designed and printed in the UK. From leatherwear and hipflasks to T-Shirts and caps, they have all you could want. Visit their website to view the variety of products. **61. New men's underwear brand Arlo Hudson** is bringing you the best in boxers. Designed to provide enhanced comfort, support and durability. Crafted in Portugal using super soft fabric, made from sustainably sourced eucalyptus fiber. Launching exclusively online in November 2019. Visit arlohudson.com **62. Pop Savvee** is a popular lifestyle brand for everyday people. Their clothing brand was created in 2017 by two brothers, and is based out of Houston, TX. Their aim is to enable men to wear high quality, comfortable products without compromising on style. **63. Inspired by the iconic MA-1 bomber jacket, Aviation88** created a range of high quality backpacks offering unique style integrated with unparalleled functionality. These 27 litre backpacks perform on every front; from water-resistant laptop pockets and enhanced padded back support to multiple accessory pockets. **64. "Tribe All"** is a street art apparel T-shirt company by artist Angela Thouless. Starting in early 2019 the aim is to make unisex urban wear at a price that is affordable to all. All images are based on original paintings motivated by my love of street art and culture. Inspired by tribal gods and ritual masks whose non-naturalistic, highly stylised forms embody powerful, highly expressive imagery. It's objective is to represent All Tribes. What's your Tribe? Sizes of t-shirts available are from small up to 4XL. **65. Subliminal Tees** was created as a response to the injustices happening in the world. They aim to support and focus on empowerment by bringing awareness to underrepresented groups and their fight for equality through their tees. You will find subliminal messages of support in all of their garments. **66. Aviaire Clothing** is a British premium streetwear brand, translated from the French term for 'bird'. They produce core basic designer products (t-shirts, hoodies, sweatshirts) with an emphasis on high quality, yet subtle designs, resulting in modern, stylish, uncompromising and comfortable clothing. The brand is also focused on 'giving back' as they work to support the Prostate Cancer UK charity which they donate to with every order. The brand that looks good, and does good! **67. Before launching Axel Arigato** in 2014, the founders saw a gap in the market for an affordable footwear brand with a couture quality. By forgoing traditional channels and engaging with customers directly, Axel Arigato made their mark in the industry as the high-end footwear brand with an affordable price tag. **68. Inverallan** supplies luxurious, traditional and high quality hand knitted garments and accessories. Available in a wide range of yarn types. The style shown here is knitted in Aran wool and available from various retailers. Visit their website to find out more. **69. 300 Species** is a luxury Italian-Australian swimwear brand. Handcrafted in Italy with a splash of Aussie humour. Beautifully tailored using the finest Italian materials with meticulous attention to detail, from carefully sourced fabric to personalised buttons and zips. Premium swimwear turned upside-down.

The Fashion Collection... Continued



SILVER TURQUOISE OCEAN RING
KEMMICOLLECTION.COM
IG: @KEMMICOLLECTION

TEN10 LIFESTYLE HAT
TEN10CLOTHING
TEN10CLOTHING.CO.UK
IG: @TEN10CLOTHING



SANIA II WOODEN EYEWEAR
OETTLUNIKATE
OETTLUNIKATE.DE
IG: @OETTLUNIKATE



BLACK MARS PYTHON GIFT SET \$255
ELEMNT NEW YORK
WWW.ELEMNT.NYC



BRUSHSTROKE BOMBER £120
LORD INT
LORD-INT.COM
IG: @LORDINTL



FINI CLASSIC LOW \$149
FINI SHOES
WWW.FINI.SHOES
IG: @FINISHOES



IT'S THE WEEKEND TEE £69
WARRIOR ADDICT
WARRIORADDICT.COM
IG: @WARRIORADDICT



COACH HOODIE \$40
LYC
ELLEWHYSEE.COM
IG: @LYC_OFFICIAL



GOLD BEADED BLAZER
SAMMIE'S COUTURE
IG: @SAMMIESCOUTURE



LESS THINKING MORE LIVING T-SHIRT £19.99
SBLIMINAL CLOTHING
SBLIMINALCLOTHING.COM
IG: @SBLIMINAL.CLOTHING



SNOWDON MILITARY GREEN BOOTS £288
VIVVANT LONDON
VIVVANT.CO.UK
IG: @VIVVANT_LDN



YETI VS STARFISH
JOSEPH & ALEXANDER
JOSEPHANDALEXANDER.COM
IG: @JOSEPHANDALEXANDERSTYLE



SNOW MARL COMFORT HOODIE £60
CAPELLO CLO
CAPELLOCLO.COM
IG: @CAPELLOCLO



STREET NO TIME (RED) T-SHIRT €39,95
WOLF CLOTHING BRAND
WOLFCLOTHINGBRAND.COM
IG: @WOLF.CLOTHING.BRAND

70. Contemporary and elegant jewellery by **KEMMI Collection** offer the ultimate range of bohemian jewellery. Designed in Montreal, each of the pieces are hand-crafted and are made using Sterling silver, Gold Vermeil as well as semi-precious stones. From rings to earrings and necklaces, their range offers complimentary styles so you can mix and match. Shop online at kemmicollection.com

71. Ten10Clothing. A luxury streetwear brand, features one of the authentic, lifestyle hats. Created by designers close to the culture. "It's a lifestyle" shop at ten10clothing.co.uk discount code GQ10 for 10% off checkout expires (31/12/2019). **72. Elemnt New York** creates bespoke, hand-stitched items from authentic exotic leathers. An unprecedented combination of luxury, innovation and technology brings mind-blowing artefacts to life. Using 24kt Gold for branding, all items are made with utmost attention to detail. Those who understand luxury don't talk, act. Don't promise, prove. Don't say, show.

73. Oettlunikate creates beautiful wooden eyewear, all handmade in Bavaria, Germany. Shown here is the Shania II, temple tips made of buffalo horn and using white Makassar wood. Order and price only on request. **74.** Derived from the dark and affluent streets of London, **LORD INT** sets a new benchmark in luxury streetwear. Crafted collections infusing modern streetwear with traditional aristocratic art styles. **75. Fini** is a versatile shoe that can be worn in multiple ways via the use of a seamless zipper. Designed with sustainability in mind in New York City and handmade in Portugal to allow one shoe to adapt to different needs and styles. **76. Sammie's Couture** is a bespoke menswear brand that offers high quality and unique pieces. Their products are luxurious yet functional making them easy to wear for any occasion. If you are looking to assume a competitive edge then be sure to check them out! **77. Sbliminal Clothing** is an independent streetwear brand created by two lifelong friends. The Less Thinking More Living design showcases the importance of mental health awareness encouraging those who can't say it to wear it. **78. Warrior Addict** - Designed in the UK - Made in Portugal. This long sleeved Raglan Tee is made from super soft and naturally anti-bacterial fabric that is 100% pro-planet. **79. LYC**, short for Love Your Change, is a one-of-a-kind genderless collection of streetwear purposed to do good. LYC strives to combine streetwear basics with contemporary details to create unique garments that can be worn by everyone and anyone - regardless of age, race and gender. 30% of all proceeds go directly into donating school supplies to children around the world. Visit ellewhysee.com and IG: @lyc_official **80.** 'Designed in London; handcrafted in Florence.' **Vivvant London** - A military green boot made of high-quality Italian leather. This boot features original contemporary details such as the chunky zip and the heavy-duty sole complements the military style. It is a very robust shoe, yet demonstrating an impeccable style for today's metrosexual men. The triple V leather stitch on the back represents their brand name signature. **81.** Quirky, sustainable, durable, and laced with imagination, **Joseph & Alexander** is fashion with a conscious. Specialising in chic swimwear, Joseph & Alexander's environmentally conscious pieces are designed to inspire the imagination and provoke curiosity. J&A create matching swimwear for the whole family made from plastic found in the ocean. **82. Capello Clo** is a Scottish, affordable menswear designer bringing luxury style to your everyday wardrobe. This unique and passionate brand caters to all sizes and all items are made with a comfortable and complimentary fit. With seasonal launches and staple classics, Capello Clo caters to all your premium fashion needs. **83.** We are so in love with **Wolf Clothing Brand**, it's unreal! This Belgian brand is perfect for the sophisticated rebel and just stands out with their designs and fantastic feel! Every modern-day James Dean will love this! Instant classics!

Festive Fizz...

1. Carpers Gin is distilled through the traditional method "one-shot". It is elaborated in a unique and very careful process that includes maceration and steam infusion of botanicals. The maceration time of botanicals depends on each one ensuring the correct extraction of essential oils, such as chestnut oil and others. Visit Carpers.es for more.

2. BVI GIN. An award-winning, small-batch craft gin distillery making its mark in the rum-soaked Caribbean. BVI GIN is created from a carefully crafted, contemporary recipe and is distilled using traditional methods and locally inspired botanicals including hibiscus flower, angelica root and grains of paradise. The resulting gin is fresh and smooth, with great depth of flavour; perfectly capturing the secrets of the British Virgin Islands. Visit bvigin.com

3. From real people Rachel and Andy, a former TV presenter and ex-Army officer, with a passion for distilling the finest gin, **Sky Wave** is a true artisan gin distilled in ultra-micro batches at the Bucknell Distillery in Oxfordshire. With a light, fresh aroma, it delivers a citrus opening, a smooth, mellow juniper-forward middle, and a long, delicately spicy finish. Available from skywavegin.com

4. Nine Reigns is a progressive brewer of the finest English beers and spirits. They pride themselves on producing handcrafted beers using only the very best premium produce. Visit ninereigns.com and follow IG @ninereigns

5. In order to create a truly extraordinary gin, **JC-Gin** use sun-kissed juniper berries from Tuscany, carefully harvested coriander seeds from the Freiburg region, strong angelica, sweet and exotic tonka bean and a pinch of a secret ingredient. JC-Gin was born out of the love of gin. A gin that combines Mediterranean lifestyle with Swiss precision. Visit jc-gin.ch

6. Rum & Coffee, Shaken or Stirred. Introducing award winning **RumJava** Artisan Crafted Rums. All natural and inspired by a passion for Caribbean culture, rum, and coffee. RumJava is infused with JavaMon coffee and other natural ingredients. Proudly 100% handcrafted, hand-filled, and hand-sealed. Find RumJava at rumjava.com and Harvey Nichols.

7. This autumn there is a breath of fresh Arran in the air, as the **Isle of Arran Distillers** have re-launched their Arran Single Malts in brand new packaging. Produced at the independent, Scottish-owned Lochranza Distillery, this delicious 10 year-old Single Malt has fresh citrus flavours and a touch of sweet vanilla and cinnamon. Some old favourites remain in the Arran range, alongside exciting new additions, including the Sherry Cask matured Single Malt – ideal for the Christmas season. If you're looking for the gift of a quality whisky Arran Single Malts are available from specialist whisky shops, from arranwhisky.com or call **01770 830264**.

8. Off the Cuffe create bitters from Irish New-make Whiskey spirit and organic botanicals. Established in 2016 and based in the Chocolate Factory in Dublin, Ireland, Off the Cuffe currently produces three flavours: Aromatic Hedgerow, Chocolate Factory and Marmalade Citrus Irish Bitters. Visit offthecuffe.info to view their full range of bitters.

9. The 2016 vintage of arguably South Africa's most iconic wine, the **KLEIN CONSTANTIA VIN DE CONSTANCE**, is a wine that will surpass all expectations for one of the most exquisite natural sweet wines in the world. Also available as a magnum in a hand-crafted box, this is most definitely a wine connoisseur's dream. Visit kleinconstantia.com

10. Lagunitas DayTime Session IPA is a light, slammable beer boldly dosed with a glorious fortune of hops. At just 98 calories per bottle and 4% ABV, DayTime is light in the things that weigh you down yet crisp and hop-forward. Visit lagunitas.com

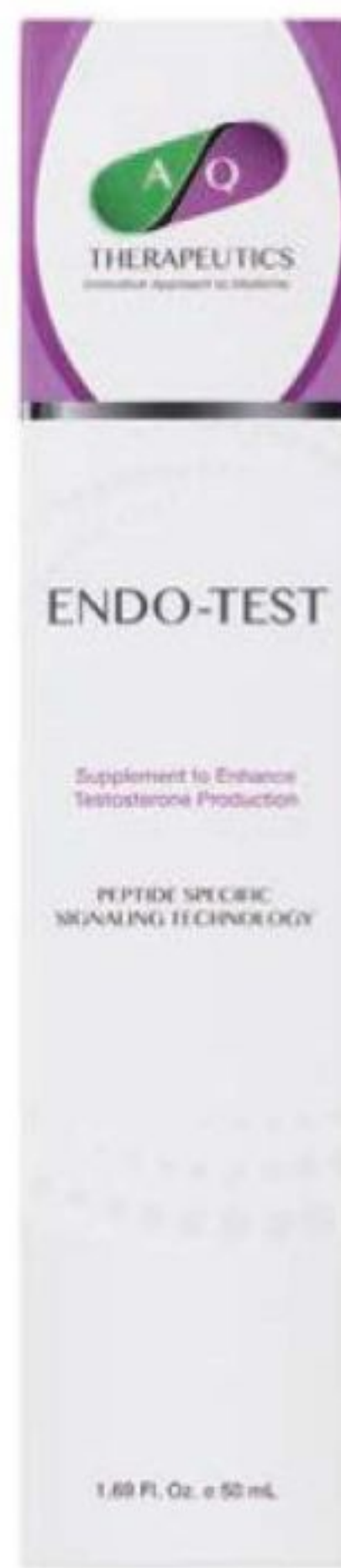
11. Bodega Bay is a Hard Seltzer (a refreshing alcoholic drink trend hot footing it over from the States) a blend of alcohol from fruits, sparkling water and fruit extracts for flavour. With no added sugar, sweeteners, or nasties. Naturally low in calories and sugar. Gluten free and Vegan. Just 72 calories a can and 4% Alc. Available on **Amazon**. Follow on IG: @BodegaBayDrink #BeautifullyBalanced

12. The Hashtag Company. CANNACOFFEE™ is "No Ordinary Coffee" – the world's first Hemp Infused coffee in a biodegradable capsule. CANNACOFFEE™ Original is sweet, smooth and nutty with notes of chocolate. For people who want more than just ordinary, visit thehashtagcompany.com

13. Bragulat is a new, trendy, forward-thinking health and wellness drink, developed in Barcelona. Made with 100% natural ingredients, this easy to prepare, flavourful drink is added to 1.5 litres of water and is ready to drink. 18 different flavours are already available with new launches coming soon to accommodate everyone's tastes! Bragulat also have a line of cocktails and spirit drinks. Visit bebidasbragulat.com and contact hello@bragulat.es for more.



Grooming Marvellous...



1. British brand Morgan's Pomade was established in London in 1873 and produces high quality men's hair, beard and spa products. The extensive product range includes pomade, hair styling, shaving, beard, cologne, spa products and gift sets. Only the finest ingredients are sourced to produce luxury professional grooming products. See morganspomade.co.uk for the full range.

2. Sacred Body Rituals helps to transform your daily routines into skincare rituals with their full range of Palo Santo-infused multipurpose and ethical bath and body care. Their Botanical Wash infuses your bathing experience with its heavenly and uplifting scent, while the highly emotive signature fragrance, captured in the Catharstick Rollerball, is perfect as a gift. All natural, unisex and sustainable. Visit sacredbodyrituals.com IG: [@sacredbodyrituals](https://www.instagram.com/sacredbodyrituals)

3. OdinsBeardcare. Welcome to Valhalla, their beard oils, butters and balms are handmade in Yorkshire. Their products include natural ingredients and vitamins. Available in 5 killer scents, the balms nourish your beard with moisture, whilst the oils aim to promote the appearance of healthy beard growth. Visit odinsbeardcare.co.uk to see more and follow on IG: [@odinsbeardcare](https://www.instagram.com/odinsbeardcare)

4. This 1% CBD face cream from **LDN CBD** is blended with orange, rosemary and nettle essential oils. Use as a moisturiser or apply with a cotton pad as a facial cleanser. Suitable for all skin types; this cream can be used for irritated or blemish-prone skin. It also smells lovely. Visit ldncbd.co.uk to buy it or other quality CBD products. Quote GQ November when buying online to get 10% off this product (expires 30/11/2019).

5. Dear Barber Style & Go Collections – Choose from 4 classic gift collections from Dear Barber, all offering premium hair and grooming products with a sophisticated vintage style. Presented in an attractive cigar box design, their collections provide an authentic and classic look – the perfect complement to any modern gentleman's grooming regime. Visit dearbarber.co.uk and follow [@dear_barber](https://www.instagram.com/dear_barber) on IG.

6. etch® TAPER Shape-up Shave Gel has been exclusively formulated for hair and beard line-ups. The line-up gel provides long-lasting, non-sticky lubrication and is a lightweight, clear formula making it ideal for high-precision shaving. Available from etch.shop. IG: [@etch_shavegel](https://www.instagram.com/etch_shavegel)

7. Barrister and Mann's homage to classic aftershaves is loaded with botanicals and extracts to treat your skin just right after a shave. Sea notes, bergamot, geranium, and lavender are blended to keep you smelling great even in the worst weather of Autumn and Winter. Visit barristerandmann.com for more and follow [@barristerandmann](https://www.instagram.com/barristerandmann) on IG.

8. Evan Alexander Grooming produces and distributes high-quality natural products created with the end users' hair and skin type in mind. 'My Hair Repair Serum' is a lightweight all natural herbal hair oil solution for hair concerns to make hair appear stronger and healthier. Peppermint oil helps hair to appear thicker for those struggling with hair loss. Visit EvanAlexanderGrooming.com for more.

9. Steeltooth Combs have natural anti-static properties which provide better control and hair health. Thick beveled steel teeth distribute natural hair oils and greatly reduce snagging while providing a scalp massage, giving your hair a more enhanced and voluminous appearance. Visit steeltoothcomb.com and follow IG: [@steeltoothcomb](https://www.instagram.com/steeltoothcomb)

10. Lockhart's new water-based Goon Grease is a culmination of a tradition and ambition. Since 2015, Lockhart's has been searching for the magic formula. WB Goon Grease, tested by over 300 barbers and fans across the globe, will be giving the appearance of hold, shine, and stability of the original Goon Grease, while washing out with just water. Visit lockhartsauthentic.com and follow on IG: [@lockhartspomade](https://www.instagram.com/lockhartspomade)

11. AQ Skin Solutions is one of the world's leading cosmeceutical skincare lines. Founded by Professor, scientist and immunologist Dr. Al-Qahtani, AQ Skin Solutions retails on all 7 continents and is further accredited in over 52 countries. Featured is the 'Endo-Test Serum', designed to help re-balance testosterone levels. Visit aqskinsolutions.co.uk

12. After over 300 years of making perfumes and colognes strictly and privately for kings and royalties in the Middle East, **The Perfumist** decided to offer their work to the public. Everything they offer is 100% limited, natural, and extremely rare. Visit their website to find out more theperfumist.com or follow on IG: [@the.perfumist](https://www.instagram.com/the.perfumist)

13. Murdock London presents their Beard Moisturiser. With daily application, a gentleman's beard will look and feel soft, comfortable and healthy. Own your beard with the unique, lightweight formula that nourishes with moisture whilst making the skin underneath appear fresher. Available at murdocklondon.com

14. Since 1854, **Taylor of Old Bond Street** have produced and sold the finest in Luxury Men's Grooming Products and accessories, creating a brand which is synonymous with British style and quality. Visit their store at 74 Jermyn Street, St James's, London, SW1Y 6NP, call **020 7930 5544** or visit them at tayloroldbondst.co.uk

15. Patriarchs is a UK based brand offering a wide range of premium male grooming products for your hair, beard, skin, shave and tattoo. A brand that believes in men, and that everyday should start with taking pride in yourself. Shop online at patriarchs.co.uk or search IG: [@patriarchsuk](https://www.instagram.com/patriarchsuk)

16. Hungry Wolf Beard Company is an all natural beard care product company based in Bastrop, Texas. HWBC is the unofficial OFFICIAL Beard Brand of the Texas Music Scene. They specialise in hand made small batch beard essentials for the modern man. Hungry Wolf Beard Co. has several unique scents to choose from including speciality scents made in collaboration with musicians, barbers, artists and professional athletes! All carefully designed to stand out and be noticed. Follow on IG [@hungrywolfbeardco](https://www.instagram.com/hungrywolfbeardco) or visit hungrywolfbeardcompany.com to see the full line of products. HOWL!

17. The Wolf Project – The secret weapon of your grooming routine. This hydrating mask sheet is made from bamboo charcoal, soaked with an impressive serum of natural extracts like tea tree, ginger root and grapeseed. Just 15 minutes to get a week worth of skin care! Visit thewolfproject.co for more information and use discount code GQ10 for 10% discount off (expires 06/12/2019).

18. La Verre Male Grooming. Premium hair care for the modern man. Their Original Hair Pomade is infused with organic beeswax to strengthen and hydrate your hair – keeping your hair in place; no matter the stresses of the day. RRP £12. Available on Amazon and at laverre.co.uk or follow them on IG. [@laverregrooming](https://www.instagram.com/laverregrooming)

19. FOLS is a sustainable skincare company exclusively for men. Their goal is to educate men on the links between skincare and mental health. Their efforts to make all ingredients natural and organic certified have resulted in a aloe vera gel, containing organic aloe vera and lavender gel. The brand takes part in re-forestation campaigns in Portugal, where they plant one tree per product sold. So far, over 200 trees have been planted! All products are UK made. Visit folsformen.com

20. Youthlure® All-In-One Skin Elixir is a perfect blend of natural ingredients. This product aims to help to reduce the appearance of ageing, dehydration and tired-looking skin. The daily skin product contains natural plant extracts, hyaluronic acid, vitamins, oils and butters. This 'Skin Elixir' is in an airtight bottle with a single dose applicator. Visit youthlure.info and follow on IG: [@mwbbodywear](https://www.instagram.com/mwbbodywear) for more information.

21. Beard and Butter is a Nigerian male grooming brand that delivers fine organic skin care to the modern man. Their desire is to create products that help to improve the appearance of skin and facial hair challenges faced by many men. Visit beardxbutter.com and follow [@beardxbutter](https://www.instagram.com/beardxbutter) on IG.

22. Milano Cento HIM. A classic, Italian inspired men's fragrance; with a twist on traditional citrus, herbaceous and woody scents. Eau de Parfum now available from selected stockists. Range includes 50ml EDT £29.50, 100ml EDT £49.50, 100ml EDP £79.50, alcohol free Deodorant Stick £15.00, a luxurious Body Wash £12.50 and a Scented Candle £35.00. For full list of stockists visit milanocento.com and follow IG [@milanocento](https://www.instagram.com/milanocento)

23. Aker Skincare offers natural and sustainable skincare to support your skin this winter. Including Tree of Life extract and Vitamin C, the winter moisturiser keeps your skin looking it's best through the harsh cold months. Available as a seasonal subscription or as individual moisturisers. Visit akerskincare.com and follow [@akerskincare](https://www.instagram.com/akerskincare) on IG.

24. Diggn'it is the Arabian Beard Company that produces Arabian inspired male care products for men to live their vibe. All their products are traditionally inspired and have been used for generations for healthy looking hair. Their ingredients are 100% natural with no added chemicals or preservatives. Check out their uniquely Arabian scents at diggnit.com and follow [@diggnit](https://www.instagram.com/diggnit)

25. Huckstle is a new company that is creating a lot of buzz from their refreshingly unorthodox selection of scents. The classic designs, modern ouroboros logo, and XXX patterns to compliment each scent profile look amazing sitting on your bathroom vanity. Afterall, "pride in appearance" is their slogan. With premium all-natural quality sourced ingredients. You will see, feel, and smell the difference in your beard and hair. Available at Huckstle.com and Amazon. Follow on IG [@huckstlepremiumgrooming](https://www.instagram.com/huckstlepremiumgrooming)

26. Heinrich Barth's Skin softening body cleanser. Rich lathering and revitalizing body cleanser infused with a blend of fig leaves and sage extracts evoking images of a summer on the Aegean islands. With this exclusive combination of botanical extracts, this gentle nourishing formula will leave your skin feeling superbly soft. Visit heinrich-barth.com

27. Bolaki's Intimate Wash for Men uses a fresh, pH-balanced formula with refreshing mint and calming tea tree oil. Whether you are preparing for the boardroom or the bedroom, get that confidence through cleanliness that puts you at the top of your game! #belucky – use Bolaki. Visit bolaki.co.uk and use discount code GQmag15 (expires 01/02/2020). IG: [@bolakiofficial](https://www.instagram.com/bolakiofficial)

28. Vitabiotics. Whether you're a working dad or a fitness enthusiast, Wellman Energy is perfect for those leading hectic lives. The great tasting refreshing drink includes vitamins B6 and B12, magnesium and iron which contribute to normal energy release and help to reduce tiredness and fatigue. With specialist nutrients including Siberian Ginseng extract and Co-Q10, the easy to carry effervescent tablets also include Vitamin C and Zinc which contribute to normal immune system function. Visit vitabiotics.com



All He Wants For Christmas...



1. With a built-in, rechargeable battery, **Pulseroll's** ultra portable self-use massage tool uses 4 vibration levels. Easily adjusted via the remote control. Reducing next day soreness and increasing blood flow to the muscles. Aiding recovery after physical activity and easing painful problems like plantar fasciitis and back pain. Visit pulseroll.com for more information.

2. Top shelf products need top shelf storage. The **Formline Supply** Smell Proof Case with lock is specifically tailored for your unique storage needs and designed to keep contents undetected. Store everything you need, everywhere you go, always scent free. Visit formlinesupply.co.uk and follow [@formlinesupply](https://www.instagram.com/formlinesupply) on IG.

3. **DeFeet** has built its reputation as a leading cycling sock brand for over 20 years. Their socks led the Tour de France for 14 days in 2019. Their USA grown and crafted merino wool socks are masterpieces for off-the-bike wear as well. Pictured, the Mondo sock. Also available, Custom crafted socks with your logo and colours. Visit defeet.com IG [@defeet](https://www.instagram.com/defeet)

4. Your new favourite on-the-go nutrition bar, **Stoka Bars** are packed with crunchy almonds or peanuts providing healthy energy and leave you feeling satisfied. With 10 different flavours, only 3-4g Net carbs, Stoka Bars are gluten free, made with clean, all-natural ingredients and no added sugar. Available on Amazon and stokabar.com IG: [@stokabars](https://www.instagram.com/stokabars)

5. One of Thailand's best kept secrets, **Namman Muay** is a regenerative cream, used by professional athletes to aid muscle activation and to help relieve pain after sport and exercise. Get yours at muaythai-boxing.com and IG [@nammanmuay_uk](https://www.instagram.com/nammanmuay_uk)

6. Boasting 12 sports modes, an integrated BioTracker™ and 24-hour heart rate monitoring, the **Amazfit GTR 47mm** is the only sports accessory you need. With Amazfit you can plan workouts, control music and monitor sleep patterns. Check it out at en.amazfit.com IG [@amazfituk](https://www.instagram.com/amazfituk)

7. **Sculptmode** is the superior athleisure with compression technology designed to help boost athletic performance during intense training. With an engaged firm fit it aims to reduce muscle oscillation to enable greater stability. Check out their collections at sculptmode.com IG [@sculptmode](https://www.instagram.com/sculptmode)

8. The **ZPurs** shoe clip with interchangeable grips, quick release system and carabiner, keeps your shoes or trainers with you whenever you need to change footwear. With 6 colours to choose from, they are a great addition for your commute or workout. £19.95 at zpurs.com

9. Made for adventure, **Rhino Skin Solutions** is the non-greasy, essential skincare line for dry, cracked, split, or sweaty hands and feet. Their earth grown massage cream also aids muscle and joint recovery. Whatever your skin type, Rhino has you covered. Visit RhinoSkinSolutions.com

IG: [RhinoSkinSolutions](https://www.instagram.com/RhinoSkinSolutions)

10. **8K Flexwarm's** heated jackets and gilets take you from 0 to 50°C in 360 seconds. Combining stylish design and revolutionary flexible heating technology, 8K Flexwarm jackets excel in cold weather so you can stay toasty without that chunky, padded coat. Get yours from 8kflexwarm.com IG [@8kflexwarm](https://www.instagram.com/8kflexwarm)

11. Designed for the adventurer, the dual phone and wallet case from **Fickaskap** is 100% waterproof to carry your valuables in style. The unique dual-pocket design separates your phone and valuables, allowing you to use your phone without it scratching. Get yours from fickaskap.com IG [@fickaskap](https://www.instagram.com/fickaskap)

12. **Fat Gripz®** is the award-winning shortcut to head-turning arms. Fat Gripz wrap around dumbbells, barbells and chin-up bars. The larger diameter then aids muscle growth, fast. Winner of the two biggest awards for fitness products. Visit FatGripz.co.uk IG [@fatgripz](https://www.instagram.com/fatgripz)

13. Ever experienced headaches, damaged teeth or jaw pain from night-time teeth grinding? **SOVA's** custom fit, slim profile night guards are designed to relieve pain and discomfort of teeth grinding at night, alleviating these symptoms and allowing you to breathe, talk and drink naturally. Visit sovanightguard.eu to get yours. £27.

14. Mouthguards shouldn't get in the way of your game which is why every **SISU** is roughly half the thickness of conventional guards. With SISU, talking, breathing, and drinking are largely unobstructed, allowing you to keep your focus where it matters: on the next big play. Get yours now from sisuguard.eu £26.80.

15. **Sega Homestar Flux.** Imagine enjoying the sky full of stars while sitting on your sofa. This dream can become reality with the Sega Toys series of home planetariums. Flux is the most powerful and most advanced model available to date. We take an incredibly popular planetarium design and refine it even further. Brilliant glass lenses and our brightest LED to date, beautiful gift box. Buy for £149 from www.segatoys.space

16. The **KeyBar** is a USA-made, customisable key organiser that features a titanium pocket clip with the ability to function as a multi-tool with inserts such as screwdrivers, a bottle opener, comb and many more. Shop their high quality products at keybar.us and use the code 'GQ10' to receive a discount (expires 01/12/2019).

17. **HandyBlend** is the world's most powerful USB rechargeable portable blender, that can even crush ice! Small enough to travel in a backpack and easy to clean, yet powerful enough to blend smoothies, shakes, baby food and more. Whether in the office, at the gym, or on the go – blend anywhere and everywhere. Charge, Blend, Go! Visit handyblend.co.uk and follow on IG: [@handyblenduk](https://www.instagram.com/handyblenduk)

18. **RUGID** is an outdoor skincare manufacture of deet free insect repellents, zinc oxide sunscreen, 6 in 1 itch and pain relief, and an alcohol-free hand sanitizer lotion. If you're looking for products that will keep you safe during your next outdoor adventure check out rugidproducts.com

19. **Safety Skin's** Reflective Skin Spread is the first reflective product designed to be applied directly on your skin. From a morning jog to marathon training, a bicycle commute to an epic cross-country brevet, swipe some on! Visit safetyskinproducts.com IG [@safetyskinproducts](https://www.instagram.com/safetyskinproducts)

20. Authors, journalists, academics and lawyers love the Apple Design Award winning writing app, **Ulysses**, for its clean design and excellent feature set. Thanks to seamless sync, you can edit your texts anywhere, anytime. Get your first three months for free at ulysses.app/promo/GQ (expires 06/12/2019).

21. Derived from aerospace manufacturing, **Crosson** hand-crafts advanced carbon fibre skis with precision and the highest quality materials. Lightweight, extremely damp, and unlike anything you have ridden before, check them out at crossonski.com IG [@crossonski](https://www.instagram.com/crossonski)

22. Instantly fix that sloppy shirt collar with the **Slick Collar**. The Slick Collar and collar stays kit gets your shirt collar to stand up and stay up while also preventing it from collapsing under the weight of your sport coat, blazer or suit jacket. Get the perfect shirt collar look in seconds with the Slick Collar and save 15% off your purchase with the SHOPGQSLICK discount code (expires 06/12/2019) at SlickCollar.com

23. Designed by pro-athletes and physiotherapists, **ELAVAIT** is the smart personal trainer in the palm of your hands. Get your free personal training and recovery plan, tailored to your specific medical history and fitness goal. Training smart and getting fit was never easier. Find out more at elavait.com and [@elavait](https://www.instagram.com/elavait) and download the app for iOS.

24. **Manors** is a brand on a mission to re-introduce style into the game of golf. The collection has received nationwide media coverage as it continues to push the boundaries of on-the-course golf attire; all of which has been designed, sourced and manufactured in England and engineered for the modern swing. Visit manorsgolf.com and follow on IG: [@manorsgolf](https://www.instagram.com/manorsgolf)

25. Streamlined to fit neatly on your index finger without disrupting technique, **SportCount's** Length/Lap Counters and Timers help you achieve your fitness goals by instantly generating statistics on your performance. Used by both performance swimmers and beginners alike, check out these affordable and versatile models at sportcount-europe.co.uk

26. Whether you're a frequent flyer, a cycling commuter or an urban athlete, the **Slicks** backpack fits any lifestyle, allowing you to pick the features which suit you best and build the pack the way you want it. With free shipping to the UK, get yours at slicks.com IG: [@slicksbackpacks](https://www.instagram.com/slicksbackpacks)

27. Hit the slopes in style with **NAKED OPTICS'** super cool ski goggles. With five different glasses to choose from, the SnapTech-Magnetic change system allows you to be perfectly prepared in seconds for any weather. Get yours at nakedoptics.net IG [@nakedoptics](https://www.instagram.com/nakedoptics)

28. In search of the perfect washbag, **HEIMPLANET** developed the Dopp Kit. Two main pockets form the core design and ensure a stable stand, a simple G-hook closure combines both pockets to one pack to save space. When unfolded hanging, it offers plenty of storage space and an orderly overview of all items – whether in a tent, in a hotel or on a plane. Made of durable ballistic nylon it's the perfect companion on any trip. Visit heimplanet.com

29. **TapStrap** allows you to transform your loved timepiece into an ultra-modern watch, just fit the strap to your current watch and download the Pingit App! Visit tapstrap.co.uk to order today! You can make purchases wherever you see the contactless symbol. For Pingit payment limits, more information and full T&Cs visit pingit.com

30. **Urbanista's** functional earphones, Athens, give you total freedom whilst exercising. Run, swim and sweat with these earphones. The stylish complementary charging case provides you with 3 additional charges each lasting up to 8 hours. With 32 hours of total playtime and a compact case to fit effortlessly into your pocket, Athens is your perfect work out companion. Get yours from urbanista.com

31. Built for the journey, **RHA's** true wireless buds last for 25 hours, are sweat and rain resistant and use a subtle and understated stem design for more reliable connection strength and call quality. Check them out at rha-audio.com

32. All-in-one leather travel TechRoll by **MANTIDY** (RRP £99). Includes 6 curated essential mobile accessories held in a cool elasticated band; made of the high-quality leather and suede. Use 17% discount code "GQ1219" at mantidy.co.uk (expires 30/12/2019).

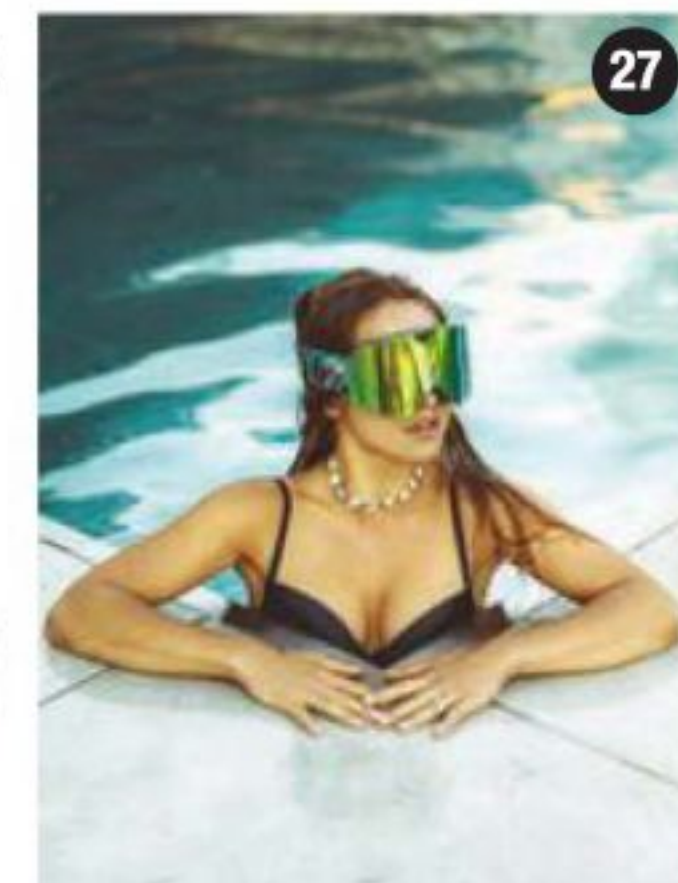
33. The USBee 20" Cabin Case from **Kitkase** allows you to keep connected whilst on the move with its in-built USB charging port. Lightweight with a ruggedized finish for increased durability and TSA lock for added security, get your Kitkase for an effortless journey from kitkase.com IG [@mykitkase](https://www.instagram.com/mykitkase)

34. This Whole Food Multivitamin For Men by premium supplement company **NATURELO** has been carefully crafted with 56 high-quality ingredients. It includes all the essential vitamins and minerals plus health blends containing probiotics, enzymes and botanicals like Ginseng and Maca. Use code 'GQ10' to get 10% off at naturelo.co.uk (expires 01/12/2019).

35. **AUSTRIALPIN** revolutionised the world of belt designs with its COBRA® – the strongest buckle worldwide! The COBRA® buckle holds up to 18 kN in loop configuration, yet it can be opened easily within a second. Used in multiple Hollywood movies, by star musicians during the Super Bowl halftime show and for many more occasions, where 100% performance is essential. The new COBRA® 38 belts with a stylish TOPO look are the perfect fit for a gentleman's casual wardrobe and for active men who seek adventures every day. Visit austrialspin.at for more.

36. **Rival Boxing Gear's** high-class professional sparring gloves are used by some of the world's best boxers. Offering the perfect fit, incredible comfort and unbelievable durability, they are handcrafted using Super Rich Microfiber, a foamy cloth lining and a part mesh palm for added ventilation. For countless rounds of high-performance visit rivalboxing.com and IG [@rivalboxinggear](https://www.instagram.com/rivalboxinggear)

37. Take your skiing to a new level this season. **CARV's** smart inserts record your skiing pressure and motion as you turn, giving you real-time audio coaching to help you perfect your technique. Take on CARV's challenges, break through your plateaus and show your friends and family what great skiing really looks like! Visit carv.ai IG: [@carv.ski](https://www.instagram.com/carv.ski)



All She Wants For Christmas...



1. The Italian brand **Dorean Fashion** signed by the Venetian artist Carla Moiso is created by women for women: an exclusive collection of luxurious and glamorous silk scarves, real objects of art and seduction. "Tribute to Caravaggio" is limited edition, made from pure silk 100x140 cm. At €680, this is the latest must-have gift 'for her', essential to create a refined and elegant look, perfect for the Christmas atmosphere.

Visit carlamoiso.com

2. **Stole and Boa** is a maker of wearable art in the form of fine silk scarves. Each nature-inspired design creates a timeless statement piece that oozes elegance, the perfect indulgence for yourself or gift for a loved one. Shop now at stoleandboa.com or email adele@stoleandboa.com

3. Natural, wildcrafted and vegan. This one versatile product will do it all. Cleanse, remove makeup and decrease the appearance of wrinkles with each application. The **Lunah Life** 'Triple Threat' is an infusion of plant oils and botanicals, with each bottle containing a rose quartz crystal. Visit lunahlife.com for more or follow on IG [@Lunahlife](https://www.instagram.com/lunahlife)

4. **My Maria Victoria**. Inspired by a passion for art and design, Maria Victoria is a beautifully and unique fashion brand offering beautifully hand crafted, woven bags made by Mexican artisans. Their skill for hand-made embellishments also extends to gorgeous dresses for little one's too. Indulge in a bright and distinctive clutch bag, as seen here, at mymariavictoria.com and explore their IG [@mymariavictoria](https://www.instagram.com/mymariavictoria)

5. Choose your perfectly fitting fitness fashion from **Beat Outdoor Gear**, the bar-setter in active wear fashion. Caro Way, the founder, was inspired to create a line of active wear and accessories that offered contemporary style without compromising on fit. Their range of premium quality clothing and matching accessories allow you to work out in style and in comfort. They offer unparalleled form fitting leggings, tops and jackets so that you can work out care-free. Shop their collection online at beatoutdoorgear.com and explore their IG: [@beatoutdoorgear](https://www.instagram.com/beatoutdoorgear)

6. **Siljourn** – one woman's journey in life, silver and stone. Built by hand, crafted from sterling and fine silver, embracing turquoise and gemstones inspired by southwest and antique design, one of a kind jewellery that will stand the passages of time, becoming an heirloom. Follow siljourn.com and IG: [@siljourn](https://www.instagram.com/siljourn)

7. **Keratia** offers the ultimate replica diamond jewellery and also the finest certified lab-grown diamonds. All settings in 18 carat gold. From £495. Visit keratia.com or call **07791 116685**. 10% off with the code GQDEC19 (expires 06/12/2019).

8. **Salty Western** is a boutique brand created by Taira Barron. She specialises in unique leather products, all handcrafted and elegant in nature. To see more of her high quality, bespoke collection visit saltywestern.com

9. **Rachel Ruth** offers a unique, bespoke jewellery design service. She commits to finding the highest quality pearls and diamonds to ensure time that each design is both exquisite and personal in design. Her pieces are elegant and timeless with a modern edge, drawing influence from love and nature. Visit rachelruthdesigns.com and follow IG: [@rachelruthdesigns](https://www.instagram.com/rachelruthdesigns)

10. Parfumerie AM Diffusion presents SO MUSK. Relax and indulge with luxurious scents by **Diane Castel PARIS**. With its rich and mature aroma, So Musk is an attractive and mysterious fragrance that emphasises a women's grace and power. Shop online through beautybase.com and save £20 on your order.

11. **RIMA CHERFANE** is a Lebanese designer fashion house, pushing the boundaries of its lifestyle sartorial label by creating pieces that lights a spark as well in the bedroom as into nightlife, just by adding the heels with it. The brand vision is to create a slow fashion and instantly vintage bespoke collection. Explore more at couturerepublic.com and IG: [@rimacherfane](https://www.instagram.com/rimacherfane)

12. Find the best in skincare with **Belle De Jour Cosmetics**, who craft luxurious and unique products using distinctive natural ingredients. The highly sought after oils, serums and creams include beneficial ingredients such as prickly pear oil, mangosteen and pomegranate, for an enriching touch of hedonism. Shop the revolutionary range online at belledejourcosmetic.com

13. Inspired by the breathtaking splendor of Indonesia, **Diana Bandoh**'s unique collection of pearl and gemstone jewellery offers elegant designs that make women feel beautiful. Diana's assortment of classic and contemporary necklaces, earrings and bracelets are well priced, and make idyllic gifts for those you appreciate and love most. Shop online at dianabandoh.com and explore the Diana Bandoh Jewelry IG [@dianabandoh](https://www.instagram.com/dianabandoh) Contact info@dianabandoh.com for all inquiries and custom orders.

14. High quality and unique handcrafted jewellery using 925 Sterling Silver, freshwater pearls and semi-precious gemstones. **TreasureBay** provides a variety of designs using natural materials making for refined, elegant gifts that suit any personality, any style. Discover that perfect piece at treasurebay.co.uk or [@treasurebayuk](https://www.instagram.com/treasurebayuk) on IG. Wear it, Love it, Treasure it.

15. Prelude Vegan Fragrance, a fresh and feminine fragrance for her – **Dolma Fragrances** are 100% vegan and cruelty free. Dolma offers fragrances for men and women that are true to nature and aim to align as much of the business to ethical and sustainable practices as possible. Dolma's range of fragrances are perfect for day or night, work or a night out. Discover Dolma Fragrances at dolma-perfumes.co.uk or follow them on IG at [DolmaVeganFragrances](https://www.instagram.com/DolmaVeganFragrances)

16. Raising the bar of beauty products is **Marie Sky Cosmetics**. Their range of vibrant lip colours allows for fun, bold and trend-setting looks. From the vivid Viper to the cooler Utopia, they have a shade to suit you. Shop online at marieskycosmetics.com

17. Limited Edition Day & Night Cadeaux by **G-Labs** offers a multi-faceted triage to alter the appearance of lines and includes powerful adaptogens for effective well being. Utilising NASA Technology to infuse meteorites for your cosmic spark of perfection in their range of oils, creams and masks. The phenomenal pioneers in skin care to provide life changing, non-surgical solutions. From consultation to treatment, the personal service to touch individual needs. Shop online at g-labs.co.uk

18. **YAYFOREARTH** is a zero waste business with an all purpose sensitive skin face moisturiser that was created by climate activist, Stevie Van Horn, to prove a product can support nature as well as our faces and bodies. Apply anytime to hydrate and calm the skin. Contact them at info@yayforearth.com yayforearth.com and IG [@stevieyaaaay](https://www.instagram.com/stevieyaaaay)

19. Latham & Neve – known for their stunning contemporary hand-made British jewellery since 1997. Featured is the unique Ripple Bangle in beaten silver and 18ct gold, £265. Ballroom bangles, everyday earrings, ravishing rings and much much more... Buy online/stockists/brochure, visit lathamandneve.co.uk or call **01580 753399**.

20. Reine Skin's mission is to create effective and simple skincare, with the vision to help women build their confidence and love for their skin at every stage of the skincare journey to healthy looking skin. Featured is their Energizing Aloe Moisturizing Facial Mask; a simple yet luxurious formula created to beautifully nourish the skin with moisture. The whipped texture helps the product to glide comfortably onto the skin, and the dead sea clay, aloe vera and tamanu oil included are suitable for all skin types. Visit reineskin.com and follow on IG [@reineskin](https://www.instagram.com/reineskin)

21. Elegant and ethical, The Raw Stone is a contemporary jewellery brand offering hand-crafted rings. Each piece is curated using traceable stones to ensure the best quality and highest standards of human rights. Their alternative and distinctive designs allows you to give a truly romantic and thoughtful gift. Shop online at therawstone.com

22. Got a wonder woman? Look no further than luxury brand Layo G for the perfect gift for your boss lady, trust us on this one. Do yourself a favour and bag her a Layo G look for her next meeting, she'll thank you after she secures the deal! Visit layo-g.com

23. Adorn yourself in wearable art by Neostruktivism. The brand offers modern and minimalist jewellery to add to any outfit. Using captivating geometric shapes, this refined exquisite collection makes an ideal gift this holiday season. Reach out for a custom design at neostruktivism@gmail.com visit neostruktivism.com and follow on IG: [@neostruktivism](https://www.instagram.com/neostruktivism) Collection by Maria Gabrieleva.

24. Select or design your perfect accessories with Jennifer's Copper and Silver. The Alaskan born artist has created a range of contemporary cuffs, earrings and necklaces that catch the light in unique ways due to the distinctive mixture of metals. Bespoke designs are also available and Jennifer can work on a one-to-one basis to craft your idyllic design. Visit jenniferscopperandsilver.com and follow on IG: [@jennifers_copper_silver](https://www.instagram.com/jennifers_copper_silver)

25. Maria Venturini is a Latin American designer who embarked on a fashion career and developed a line called **Venturini Couture** showing her latest collections during fashion weeks around the world. The romantic style of her design has become a signature inspired by high-end ateliers in Paris and Milan. Her soft sensual styles, fascinating details and exceptional tailoring is what makes Venturini Couture the go-to destination for high-end gowns and evening wear. Follow them on IG: [@venturinicouture](https://www.instagram.com/venturinicouture) and see more of the collection at venturinicouture.com

26. Plocus. Created by Gregory and Julien Plocus the brand have seen the light in 2017. Plocus gives rise to Ornamental Substances. The vestiges of the past reappear in a future of synthesis. The ring is available in 18K Gold and also in Sterling Silver. Visit plocus.fr for more information.

27. Contemporary and unique handbag brand, Liselle Kiss, presents made-to-order bags to suit your loved one's style. With designs she can wear from day to night, the hand-crafted bags are created in New York. As the perfect gift, Liselle Kiss likes to say her handbags can be gifted to a loved one as love armour. Give a Kiss. Price shown \$2250. Shop online at lisellekiss.com

28. Beautifully hand-crafted bags by Aliso Bay allow your loved one to have a wearable piece of art. Each bag is individual and one-of-a-kind, making it a truly special gift. Their range of shoulder bags are infused in a fun and modern bohemian style. Shop online at alisobay.com and explore their IG [@aliso_bay](https://www.instagram.com/aliso_bay)

29. Meet musician/designer/photographer of Merltoinette. Combining his own and his mothers names – Merlin & Antoinette to create this upcoming brand called Merltoinette. Toinettejr is his sole musician and artist name as the full brand name is Merltoinette. His mother, Nette, passed years ago and it has been his truest desire and intention to inspire the world through his own stories, inspirations and talents. Checkout merltoinette.com and follow on IG: [@merltoinette](https://www.instagram.com/merltoinette) [@toinettejr](https://www.instagram.com/toinettejr) for his unique visuals.

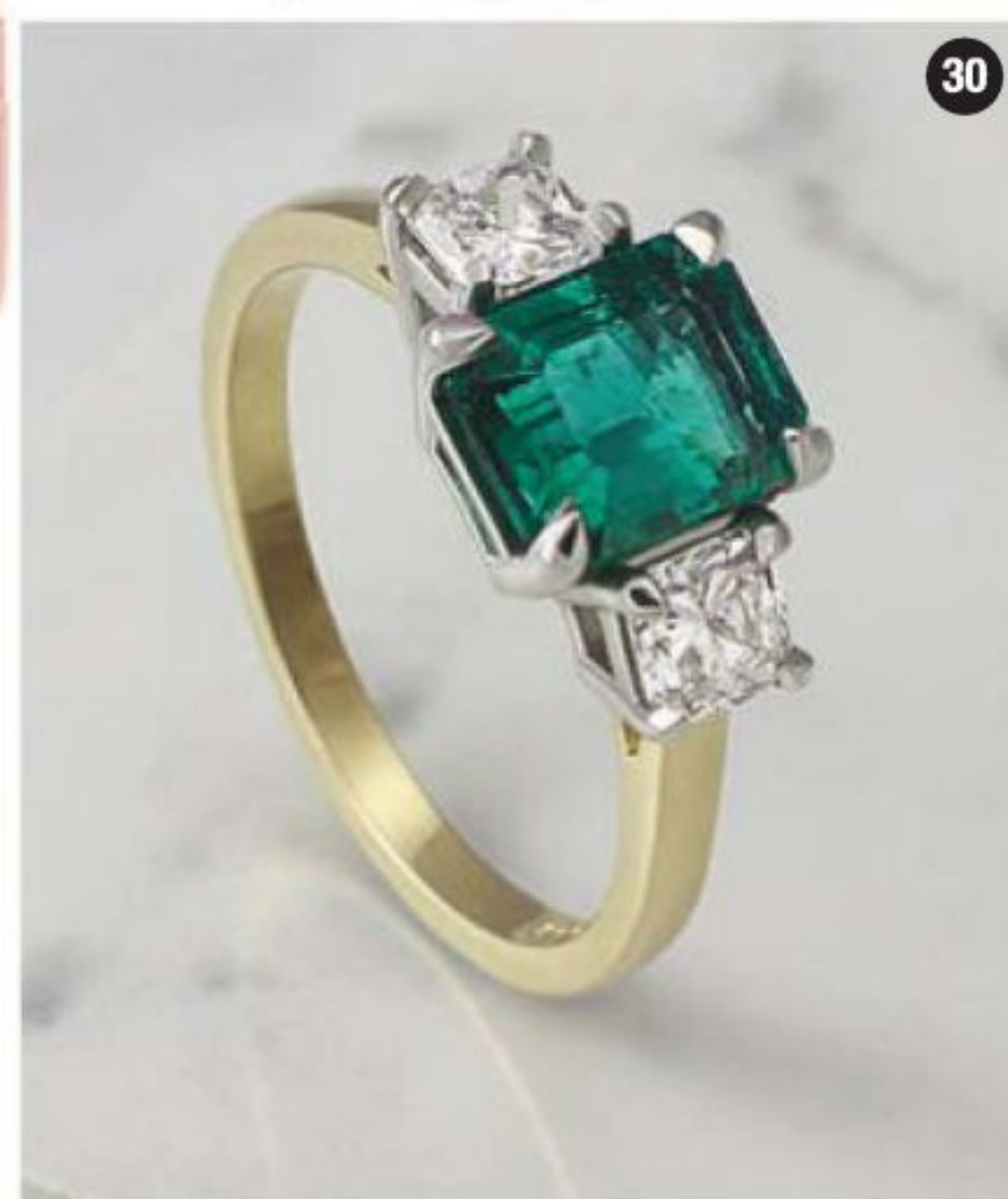
30. Simon Wright offers a complete bespoke service, making your jewellery in platinum and gold using the finest diamonds and gemstones. An appointment involves viewing stones, a short tour of the workshop, and a sit down design session all in his Clerkenwell studio workshop. By appointment only. For more information visit sw-jewellery.com and follow on IG: [@sw_jewellery](https://www.instagram.com/sw_jewellery)

31. NEGIARABANI. Add a little glitter and glam to your look with this matching cowboy boot key chain and ring. In glitter acrylic this is a perfect accessory gift for your special person. Want this in a different material? Check out negiarabani.com for more options. Follow on IG: [@negiarabanisf](https://www.instagram.com/negiarabanisf)

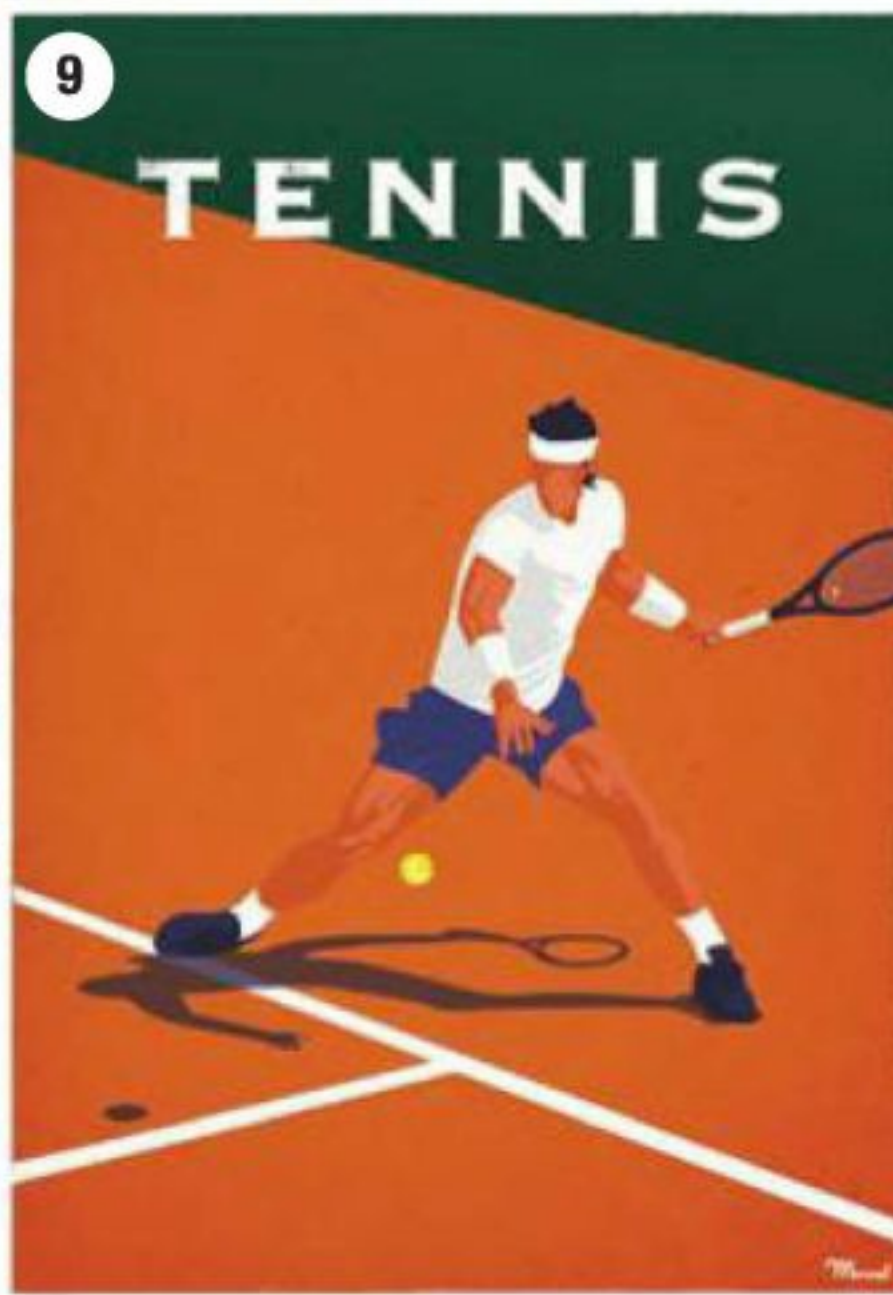
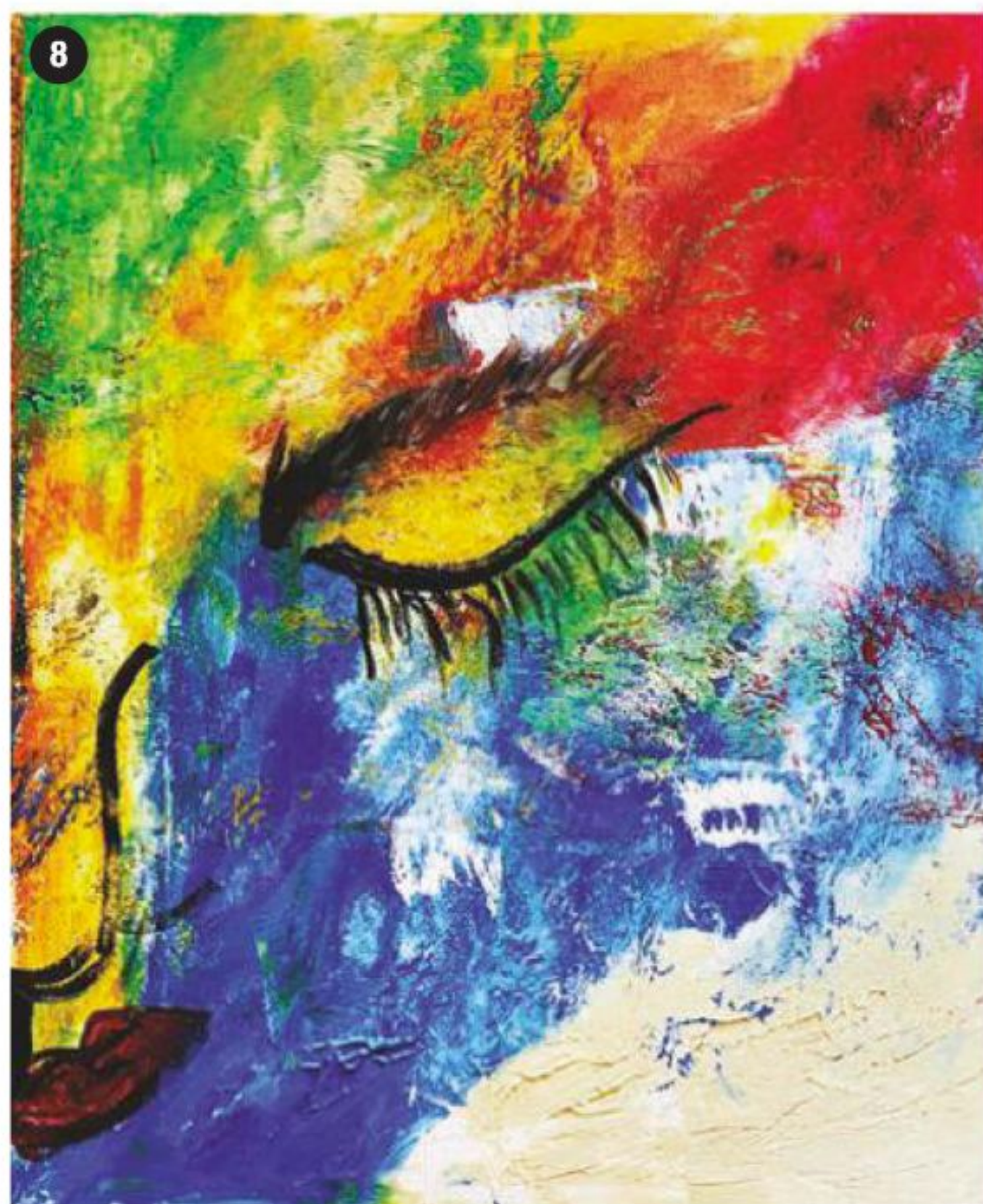
32. She will fall in love with Vana Europe this Christmas. With their stunning Italian fabrics and adjustable fits, their swimwear has been thoughtfully created to enhance her figure and empower her confidence. If your chasing the winter sun Vana is the one! Can't choose a style? A Vana Gift Card is the perfect stocking filler. Visit vanaeurope.com and use 'VANAXGQ' at the checkout for an exclusive discount before Christmas (expires 06/12/2019).

33. SSY Designs. is the ultimate in luxurious practicality. Designed for and by the modern woman, their products seek to enhance what already lives in her wardrobe, making anything from SSY the perfect gift for any of the ladies in your life. And while their line of products is almost all-encompassing, including bags like the sexy and timeless croc-embossed Christina above, SSY is really synonymous with their trademark item: the Shoe Jewelz. These beauties – equally at home on stilettos as they are on sneakers – are uniquely fashioned to slide over her preexisting footwear and transform them into something entirely new. Shown here in SSY's iconic spider design, they can take you from day to night and even Halloween. Shoe Jewelz will refresh her "shoedrobe," saving you both time and precious cashish! – shoes independent of the brand. Handbag and Shoe Accessory – SSY. For more information visit ssydesigns.com and follow on IG: [@ssy_designs](https://www.instagram.com/ssy_designs)

34. Movi Activewear is designed with both style and function in mind - ensuring that your workout gear supports and empowers you to perform your best. Their collections are crafted using high-quality fabrics, are inspired by the latest trends and have been cut to flatter all body types. Available in a range of colours and styles – visit moviactivewear.com or IG [@moviactivewear](https://www.instagram.com/moviactivewear) #THISISMYMOVI



Bachelor Pad...



1. The painting featured, entitled "Vogue", is one of a collection of pieces by Washington, DC – based artist, **Courtney Kolker**, recently on exhibit at Long View Gallery in the heart of the District. Known for her vibrant use of colour in the abstract, Kolker's art is a visual representation of a place or a particular moment in time that inspired the work. For more information, or for commission inquiries, visit ckolker.com, email courtney@ckolker.com or follow her on IG [@courtney_kolker](https://www.instagram.com/courtney_kolker)

2. **Sally Blair Ceramics** produces contemporary ceramic vessels. Each piece is a canvas for a one-of-a-kind painting. Inspired by Bauhaus, these architectural objects are aiming to blend art, life and craft. Discover more at sallyblairceramics.com or on IG: [@sallyblairceramics](https://www.instagram.com/sallyblairceramics)

3. **Hillbrow Manor** supply a range of luxury, highly scented, handpoured home fragrance products including Soy Wax candles, Car air fresheners, Reed Diffusers & Wax Melts all available in 15 fabulous fragrances. Featured product 100ml Rose Gold Reed Diffuser, £17.50. GQ readers receive 10% off using code GQ10 at checkout (expires 01/12/19). hillbrowmanor.co.uk

4. Fresh out of London, independent and ethical brand, **London Bathers**, helps you relax and rejuvenate with their range of organic liquid cleansers, natural soaps and soaking salts. Blending quality ingredients with an eco-led, minimalist aesthetic, their sets will make coveted Christmas gifts. Follow them on IG [@londonbathers](https://www.instagram.com/londonbathers) and shop online at londonbathers.co.uk using code GQNOV for a 10% discount (expires 01/12/2019).

5. **Pullman Editions** designs striking original limited-edition posters that capture the enduring appeal of Art Deco. Their posters feature winter sports, glamorous resorts around the world, and historic automobiles. Over 100 designs available at £395 each. Call **020 7730 0547** or view and buy online at pullmaneditions.com

6. **Jenna Paige** is an artist and graphic designer based in Melbourne, Australia. She is dedicated to bringing you the most modern art that will warm any room and ease any soul. Jenna Paige is known for her large canvas work that is highly inspired by the ocean and other wonders that mother nature offers us. Her abstract art is so full of colour it will make any room come to life. Visit jennapaige.net.co and follow on IG: [@jennapaige_art](https://www.instagram.com/jennapaige_art)

7. **Jennifer Blix** is an expressionism artist based in the US. Her new collection, which includes "The Gear" shown here, is entitled "Dominating Modes of Behaviour." It depicts archetypes of people whose forceful behaviours take control of others; indeed these paintings are inspired by those whose behaviour goes too far. To find out more, visit jblix.com and follow on IG: [@jblix](https://www.instagram.com/jblix)

8. **Stephanie Dillon** is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Minnesota. Her vibrant works are made with found materials, acrylic paints and recycled canvases. She believes that old is still beautiful, what we have is enough, and art is everywhere. For samples of her work, visit fleurdejunk.com

9. **Marcel Travel Posters** design beautiful vintage prints for your home. Their original illustrations such as "Bains de Mer" are a perfect finishing touch to any room of the house. Visit marcel-travelposters.com and follow [@marcel_travelposters](https://www.instagram.com/marcel_travelposters) on IG to find out more.

10. French artist and designer **Lina Karam**, is inspired by the Mediterranean, Love, Mythology, Sculpture and Life. Using a varied palette of pearly, matt and transparent oils Lina enjoys playing with texture with motifs that vanish in the rhythm of the canvas. Visit linakaram.com or visit Lina's profile on saatchiart.com to discover her latest works.

11. **Tammy Leigh Brooks** is an American self-taught clay artist. From Polish chickens to red-tailed hawks, her work continues to evolve. Each highly-detailed sculpture reveals countless hours of hard work and dedication, along with love and energy that just keeps going and going. Pictured is 'Daddy-Ray', Daddy Ray was created in loving memory of a family patriarch who had a "hawk's eye" for business. Visit tammyleighbrooks.com to see more of her collection.

12. Teak Star Cutting Board Collection from **Edge of Belgravia** combines teak wood with a unique facet design. If you think cutting boards are boring, look again. The Teak Star has been awarded multiple design awards and would be an appreciated gift. Visit edgeofbelgravia.co.uk for more.

13. **Nantucket Candle Company** proves that history really does repeat itself. As a whaling capital and hub for business in the 19th century, one of Nantucket's commodities were luxury candles made from whale and beeswax. This company was set up to continue this but in a sustainable way, using a coconut wax blend while keeping the local beeswax. They create scents infused with elements from the island's most precious locations, keeping you on the island even when you're off. Visit nantucketcandleco.com and follow on IG: [@nantucketcandleco](https://www.instagram.com/nantucketcandleco) for more.

14. **Justine Foord** is the first solo female artist from the UK to exhibit in modern times in Cuba; her artwork 'Trinidad to Havana' is currently in the British Embassy art collection in Havana, Cuba. 'Candela' was her first international traveling exhibition that opened in Madrid and then onto Cuba. Foord's signature method of painting directly on photographs is on full display in this body of work, with gorgeous, moody colourful landscapes partially obscured with surreal clouds of smoke and soot. Featured here is 'Arenal Volcano to San Jose'. Visit justinefoord.com or follow on IG: [@justinefoord](https://www.instagram.com/justinefoord) to see more.

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Rosemary Brooke finds piste-side properties in the
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As December approaches, all thoughts turn to skiing – across the Alps, resorts are reopening, lifts are whirring into action, and those with chalets suddenly become very popular with their friends. If your idea of heaven is flying down a snowy slope, then investing in a mountain property could bring you joy for decades to come. Although the consequences of Brexit will clearly affect any cross-currency purchases, those with existing exposure to the euro or Swiss franc might find this an opportune time to buy – the recent drop in British buyers means there's less competition and more chance of getting a good deal.

'The Alpine property market does not freeze just because of Brexit,' says Jeremy Rollason, head of Savills Ski. 'Swiss buyers have been active in the French Alps, picking up comparative bargains across the border thanks to the exchange rate. Throughout the European resorts, domestic buyers have been taking advantage of the lack of overseas competition and using the opportunity to negotiate in what is a relatively uncompetitive market.'

Across the Alps, there is no shortage of

properties to choose from – in Méribel, for example, a former hotel has been transformed into a series of ski-in-ski-out apartments. This popular resort has traditionally attracted a strong British contingent, ever since it was founded by a retired Scottish colonel in the 1930s. Antarès 1707 has much to recommend it, with plenty of on-site facilities and services designed to make your stay more comfortable, from private catering and chauffeurs, to ski instructors who can guide you down some of the more treacherous runs.

Also in Méribel is Chalet Bellevue, built in the traditional Savoyard style, with a large stone fireplace, wooden walls and



SITTING BULL ROAD, MONTANA

Montana's Big Sky resort is known for its quiet slopes and wide-open spaces – skiing here is a very different experience from the often-crowded Alps. This newbuild apartment spans 3,095 square feet and has six bedrooms – it comes with secure parking and additional storage for ski equipment. \$2.095 million.

Christie's International Real Estate:
00 1 406 995 4009

wraparound terraces that capture the winter sun. Although the chalet has five bedrooms – six, if you include a small single – there are enough quiet spots to ensure that it never feels crowded, such as the sauna and well-being room, the games room on the lower-ground floor, and the outdoor hot tub. The chalet has mountain views, yet is just a short walk from restaurants, boutiques and cafes.

If you go over the hill to Courchevel, there's plenty to tempt a prospective buyer. Six Senses Residences puts it best with its motto 'ski in – dine out'. This resort town is home to some of France's finest restaurants – there is a dizzying array of Michelin-starred establishments to choose from. It's one of the best places to enjoy a luxurious getaway while enjoying first-class



COURCHEVEL, FRANCE

On the edge of the ski slopes, this contemporary chalet sits in a secluded setting surrounded by fir trees, yet it's conveniently close to the runs. It's perfect for entertaining, with generous dining and sitting areas, and has five bedrooms, all of them en-suite. €9.75 million.

Knight Frank:
020 7861 1727

DER ALPENSTERN, KITZBÜHEL, AUSTRIA

Occupying a large plot with development potential in the tranquil area of Reith bei Kitzbühel, this five-bedroom farmhouse is a short drive from Kitzbühel resort.

A lift enables easy access to all floors, while the basement houses a sauna and swimming pool. €14.9 million.

First Kitzbühel: 00 43 535 666 604



VILLARS-SUR-OLLON, SWITZERLAND

As the closest ski resort to Geneva airport, Villars is a popular choice with second-homers and is noted for its international schools. This seven-bedroom chalet is located on a quiet private road with mountain views and skiing from the doorstep. CHF 8.95 million.

Knight Frank: 020 7861 1109



CHALET LES ESSERTS, SWITZERLAND

This recently built chalet, located in one of the most sought-after areas of Verbier, can be custom-finished by the new owner.

There are six to seven bedrooms, a pool and spa and a wine cellar, as well as a private lift and a heated roof terrace.

CHF 19.5 million.

*Sphere Estates:
020 3617 1360*



skiing – like Méribel, it's part of Les Trois Vallées, which is the largest linked ski area in the world, with 183 lifts and about 600 kilometres of slopes. Six Senses Residences has nine apartments currently available to buy. With rental values for one of its four-bedroom chalets in the region of €29,000 a week during peak season, they represent a potential source of income, as well as a high-end retreat.

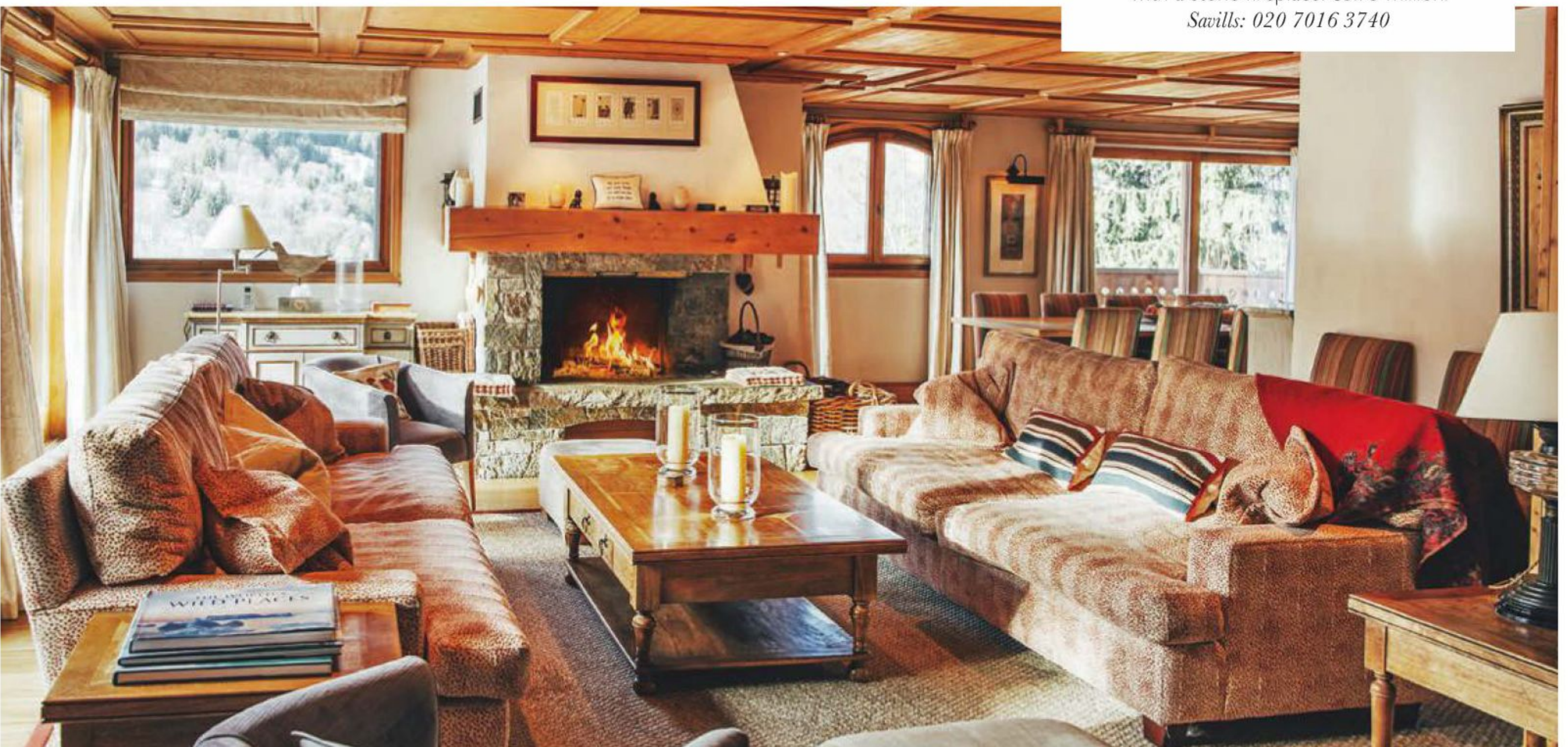
In Switzerland, Verbier has a thriving nightlife and some of the best off-piste skiing around. You can be certain of snow, as well as spectacular views from the highest points, stretching as far as the Matterhorn and Mont Blanc. Properties include a vast, recently built chalet in the sought-after Les Esserts area, with an indoor swimming pool and direct access to the pistes. Chalet Les Esserts spans five levels, with the final touches and interior finishes to be decided by the buyer. There's underground garaging for four cars, a spa and a sauna.

Further east, the Austrian town of Kitzbühel is another popular spot for overseas buyers, with a variety of options available, from apartments to chalets. With a medieval town centre, it's got more of

CHALET BELLEVUE, FRANCE

This traditional chalet is a short stroll from the heart of Méribel. Set across four floors, it has wraparound balconies to make the most of the sun, and an outdoor hot tub. Features include a large open-plan living and dining area, complete with a stone fireplace. €3.95 million.

Savills: 020 7016 3740



SIX SENSES RESIDENCES COURCHEVEL, FRANCE

One of Courchevel's smartest addresses, this collection of luxurious apartments benefits from a round-the-clock concierge, a residents' club lounge and private catering. These properties are ideally placed to enjoy one of the most fashionable spots in the French Alps. Prices on request. www.one-courchevel.com

a sense of history than some of the newer resorts. Kitzbühel is perhaps best known for the annual Hahnenkamm downhill ski race, a World Cup event that attracts top international athletes – it's famously thrilling to watch, and notoriously dangerous to compete in.

There are some charming properties to be found hidden away in the surrounding countryside, such as an 18-century chalet which is being sold through Savills. This traditional building is full of character, with plenty of period details – these include the iron-studded front door, which dates from 1636. Intriguingly, the building was moved to its present location in 1976 – before then, it had been in north Austria. Unusually for a ski property, this chalet has a pretty garden, and in fact it's perhaps even more bucolic during the summer months. For that's an often-overlooked aspect of owning a chalet – you might initially plan to lock it up and leave when the snow melts, but once you get a taste for the ever-changing landscape of the mountains, you'll find yourself visiting all year long.

**KIRCHBERG IN TIROL, AUSTRIA**

This generously sized chalet has seven bedrooms and is situated in the heart of the Kitzbühel Alps. You can ski straight from your front door, while the lift stations are a five-minute drive away. Amenities include a sauna, steam room and Jacuzzi. €7.35 million.

First Kitzbühel: 00 43 535 666 604

REITH BEI KITZBÜHEL, AUSTRIA

This 18th-century farmhouse was moved from north Austria to its current location – a tranquil enclave less than five kilometres from the main Kitzbühel resort. At 4,833 square feet, it has five bedrooms and a self-contained flat. €5.7 million. *Savills: 020 3428 2949 or 020 7016 3753*





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MILL HILL, LONDON, NW7

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Conveniently situated within less than a mile of Mill Hill Broadway's plethora of restaurants, cafes, shops & transport facilities, including the Thameslink station, which provides direct links to the City in approx. 20 minutes, as well as within easy access by car to central London & all major airports. (EPC Rating: B)

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CONDÉ NAST
BRITAIN | PROPERTY

In a *special supplement*, Condé Nast Property shines a spotlight on the key players and the *most exciting new developments* on the property scene. Discover the people and places on our radar this autumn

*An interior at Northacre's prestigious
No.1 Palace Street development opposite
Buckingham Palace, managed by Rhodium
numberonepalacestreet.com*

Centre Stage

PROPERTY | PROMOTION

London's Mr Super Prime

Experience is all in a challenging property market. With expectations of quality higher than ever, *Mark Tunstall* continues to build his *trusted bespoke lettings service* on strong client relationships and a perfectionist approach

Mark Tunstall's boutique service knows no bounds. The London lettings specialist has just returned from one of his regular trips to Hong Kong to meet clients, some of whom he has known for almost 20 years. "One of my missions was to deliver a pair of painstakingly sourced, limited-edition Balenciaga trainers so a client could surprise his wife for her birthday. That's the sort of thing we find ourselves doing," he says. With an understanding garnered from two decades of experience in the lettings business – almost a generation's worth of on-the-ground intelligence and in-the-air zeitgeist, Mark has instincts honed through both blue-sky climates and downturns. When it comes to nurturing a happy landlord/tenant dynamic (which equates to longer tenancies), he is second to none.

High property taxes and uncertainty about Brexit means renting remains the wise choice for wealthy foreigners. This has created an opportunity for savvy investment landlords and Mark is well tuned into the booming build-to-rent market. "There is a sustained appetite for top-notch turn-key homes from wealthy tenants prepared to pay a premium," he says. "One client has capitalised on the favourable exchange rate to buy a building overlooking one of Knightsbridge's most prestigious garden squares. Plans have just been finalised for five turn-key residential flats developed specifically for rent. We were able to introduce him to architects, builders and interior designers – he brought in his own feng shui adviser – with the pedigree to deliver a first-class, finished product within six months of purchase. The properties will then be rented out for premium prices."

The stunning Chelsea house pictured here – unusually wide at almost 35ft, with fully air-conditioned, fully furnished six-bedroom accommodation over four floors, a beautifully landscaped garden and off-street parking – is a textbook example of the build-to-rent phenomenon. "The clients established a property fund, which we have been advising on since inception, specifically to buy, redevelop and then hold super-prime homes as income-generating assets. They have an enviable track record of consistently achieving the highest returns on a pounds-per-square-foot basis. They know exactly what tenants want and have honed their product to deliver that."

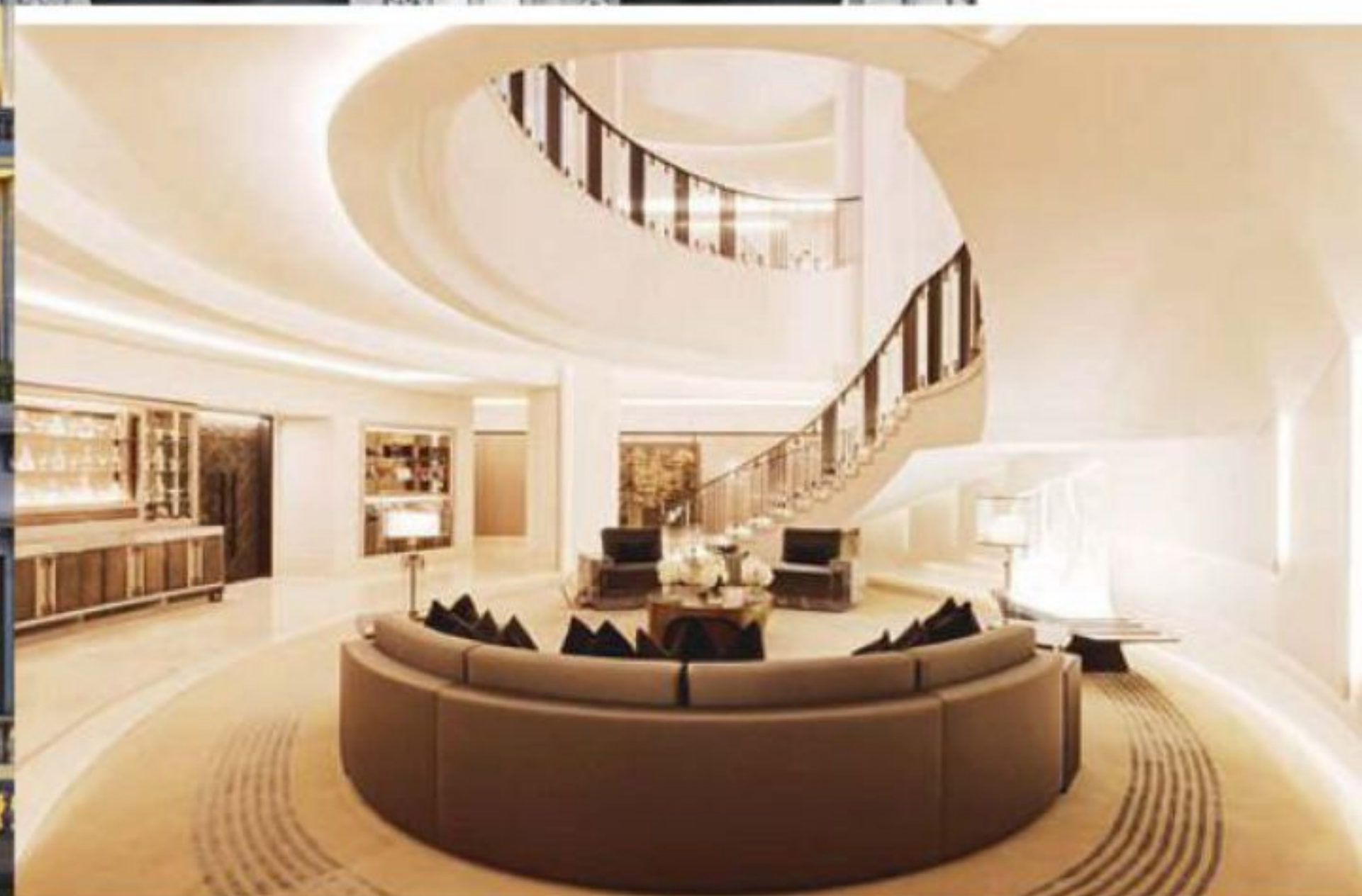
For further information, please visit tunstallproperty.co.uk

**CLOCKWISE
FROM RIGHT**
*Pretty orangery
and elegant
reception room
in a built-to-rent
luxury house
in Chelsea;*
Mark Tunstall



The Ultimate Professionals

Discreet, focused and experienced, the founders of *Clifton Property Partners* pride themselves on their ability to offer an *exceptional, open-all-hours service* to those seeking property advice in prime central London



There is much talk about the demise of old-school, shop-window estate agency particularly for the High Net Worth market, but action? Cue, two distinguished property specialists Robert Windsor and James McManus. In launching Clifton Property Partners earlier this year, the two highly experienced Central London stalwarts have established a multi-disciplinary property company based at No.3 Hill Street in the heart of Mayfair, which focuses on offering a comprehensively professional service to clients and customers. The CPP office is linked to private members club, 42 Berkeley Square, which allows for a more discreet and formal setting for meetings, dining and presentations.

“We wanted to change the perception of our profession by harnessing the three pillars of knowledge, experience and service,” says Windsor. “Ours is a very simple model of exceptional service and professional advice built on nearly 35 years of combined experience in the industry.” The pair, who boast an exemplary black book of contacts after years of networking and repeat business, work alongside solicitor Joanna Ward (a former partner at Taylor Wessing) and marketing consultant Kim Pattie (who previously worked for Candy & Candy and Caudwell Collection) to offer a highly personalised, bespoke service.

“High-end property is a global marketplace,” says McManus

“and it is our in-depth knowledge and understanding of the local market that our clients consistently call on to assist in the decision-making process. Clients want us to be available at 6am or 8pm and consequently we are ‘open all hours’ using all forms of communication such as WhatsApp and WeChat. When someone calls up, they get the two of us and all our experience.”

Proof of CPP’s expertise lies in their early clients which include super-prime developer Northacre’s No. 1 Palace Street scheme, Coronado’s One Molyneux Street, Fenton Whelan’s Greybrook House and Rigby & Rigby, as well as a selection of individual properties ranging from £795,000 to well above £20million. They also count an Earlcrown interior-designed Green Park-facing apartment in British Land’s Clarges Mayfair development among their early sales. The business has grown since its inception in March, thanks to references from previous clients and wealth managers and the considered way in which CPP tailor each individual client’s requirements. Trust in advice underpins all super-prime property transactions. “The ‘what’ is easy, it’s explaining the ‘why’ – or the ‘why not’ – where traditional agencies fall short,” they say. Anyone can show a property, but getting the deal across the line takes a certain understanding and skill which this duo more than offer.

Please visit cliftonpropertypartners.com or call 020 7409 5087

**CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE
LEFT, Northacre’s
No.1 Palace
Street; James
McManus and
Robert Windsor;
the famed Atrium
at British Lands’
Clarges, Mayfair**



Oasis in the Spanish Sun

La Reserva de Sotogrande is one of the most sought-after addresses on the Iberian Peninsula. Within that enclave, the six exquisite villas in the gated community of El Mirador offer a magical *lifestyle* for year-round residency

With five championship golf courses, international polo, upscale marinas and tennis courts, Sotogrande is hailed as a sun-drenched sporting paradise for seasonal relaxation and year-round living. Twenty minutes from Gibraltar, Europe's most exclusive private resort has been a haven for high-profile celebrities since the Sixties. That low-key but illustrious allure – and the enticing mix of Mediterranean beachfront, sophisticated architecture and the privacy that its landscaping and design affords – has created a paradise environment for those seeking a discreet, luxury lifestyle.

There is nothing like this pocket of the southern Iberian coast for sunshine, but Sotogrande is more than a seasonal leisure destination. With a community of 2,500 full-time international households, it is also home to more than 300 businesses and one of Spain's best-regarded International Schools. "Prices in Sotogrande have consistently been higher than other prime locations and they continue to maintain their value. Sotogrande's allure lies in its position, abundance of space and unbridled views," says Sotogrande SA chief executive Marc Topiol.

"It has remained a community that has developed slowly over time and always in harmony with the rich nature that surrounds it. Given this, and the myriad of amenities, the relaxed, unpretentious atmosphere within Sotogrande has allowed it to maintain a magical sensibility unlike any other place. The lifestyle coupled with the fact that La Reserva Club is still within easy reach of buzzy towns like Marbella,

and cultural centres such as Seville, Cordoba and Cadiz, makes for a winning formula."

The exclusive 1,154-acre private residential community of La Reserva de Sotogrande is one of the most sought-after addresses on the Iberian Peninsula. This stellar enclave features The Seven (from €14m), a collection of one-of-a-kind homes designed by seven of the world's leading architects, hidden amongst 10 hectares of verdant parkland modelled by world-renowned landscape architect Jean Mus; El Mirador (from €5.8m), a gated community of six exquisite contemporary villas designed by leading Andalusian architect Manuel Ruiz of ARK architects; and the 15 (from €2.8m), a community of 15 unique "cliff-hanging" sites for your dream home. All the real estate offerings include access to the fabulous country club-style facilities of La Reserva Club.

Perched in a prime position above La Reserva Club, the El Mirador villas revel in gorgeous sweeping sea views from every aspect. Each palatial, pavilion-style property has clean modern lines and an abundance of natural light with floor-to-ceiling windows, infinity pools, tiered terraces and extensive outdoor living space. Villas Infinita, Roca and Tucana are sold while three further residences are now available for sale.

Villa Dorado (€9m) exemplifies El Mirador's graphic style – sharp lines and cool stones softened by rich planting and sensitive landscaping – with extensive terraces, six bedroom suites, indoor and outdoor pools, a gym and spa. Seven-bedroom Villa Lavanda (€9m) boasts a private landscaped balcony and splash pool off the master suite; its communal entertaining areas merge secluded and sociable spaces, indoor and outdoor living. Five-bedroom Villa Vela, due to be delivered in April 2020 (€9.2), is arranged over three floors around an embracing, circular central terrace. The architectural style brings together interiors and exteriors, and landscaped gardens frame panoramic views to Andalucía, the Rock of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean.

As well as unparalleled views across the pristine green of the golf course and the sparkling sea, residents enjoy privileged access to The Beach, also known as Europe's first private inland oasis. "The El Mirador properties are ideal for families and individuals who wish to enjoy the benefits not only of La Reserva Club and unfettered access to attractions such as The Beach, but also yachting, polo, excellent gastronomy, a unique lifestyle, privacy and security," says Marc Topiol.

"The nearby international school makes El Mirador a perfect year-round residence for those wishing to call Sotogrande home. Direct access to the La Reserva Club golf course, contemporary architectural design that makes the most of the stunning views of the Mediterranean Sea, and true indoor/outdoor living spaces make these beautiful properties a unique proposition."

For more information, please visit lareservaclubsotogrande.com, call 0034 856 560 922 or email lareserva.residencial@sotogrande.com

Throughout its 400 gated hectares, La Reserva de Sotogrande offers the perfect country club setting



Restoration Splendour

From new-build projects to restorations of listed buildings, *Octagon* is the UK's leading developer of one-of-a-kind luxury custom residences – and the *Bespoke Division* is the *ultimate turn-key service* in planning, designing and building a dream home



An indoor swimming pool that converts into a dance floor, a self-ventilated cigar room with humidor, a lift that goes straight from master bedroom to garage. A dream luxury home is much more than just a wonderful building in a hand-picked location; it has heart, and soul, and an undeniable wow factor characterised by the personalised details that make it unique. No matter what specialist amenities or whimsical features you desire for your ideal home, Octagon Bespoke can design, craft and construct them – either as part of the scheme for a custom-built new home or as a comprehensive renovation project.

Established more than 40 years ago as a luxury homebuilder par excellence, Octagon later founded the Bespoke Division to build unique properties from scratch. The specialist team offers clients support, from finding a plot of land and obtaining planning permissions through to detailed design and specification; the team also facilitates fastidious restorations and exquisite extensions. “We could be designing a beautiful eight-bedroom family home in Weybridge, renovating a Victorian townhouse in Mayfair, or extending a penthouse apartment on the Thames,” says Octagon Bespoke Director John Pope. “Working to the client’s brief is the most important thing,

and with such an experienced team of specialists, we’re always full of suggestions and ideas.”

With an extensive portfolio featuring the restoration of listed period properties, Octagon transforms heritage buildings for 21st-century living. Eagle House, a Grade II*-listed mansion in Wimbledon Village, is one of the latest conversion projects completed alongside English Heritage. Recently, a beautiful Grade II-listed house in Ovington Square, Knightsbridge (*pictured above*) was significantly refurbished. “Our restoration of this stucco Regency property has brought an iconic building back to life on one of London’s loveliest garden squares,” says Pope. “Having fallen into disrepair, our team meticulously returned the property to all its former magnificence, both inside and out.”

The Bespoke approach embraces all aesthetics, including cleverly configured country residences (*above left*), complete with Octagon’s signature state-of-the-art climate-control systems and gorgeous interior design. No wonder the division gets a lot of repeat customers – or that there is a club of Octagon owners happy to give testimonials about their magnificent homes.

Octagon Bespoke undertakes projects from £1m. Please visit octagonbespoke.com or call 020 8481 7500

**CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP LEFT,
an Octagon
new-build country
residence; the
renovated Ovington
Square house;
interiors
with restored
period details**

Luxury with distinction

With an *exceptional portfolio* of gilded new-build schemes such as Buxmead on The Bishops Avenue, The Bryanston Hyde Park and Northacre's The Broadway, *Rhodium* provides a *super-stellar* level of luxury property management across some of the most desirable postcodes in London

Rhodium, the rarest of valuable precious metals, is also known as one of the most invisible resources on earth – which makes it the perfect name for a luxury property management company that specialises in an extraordinary level of discreet bespoke services to London's super-prime homes and prestigious new-build developments in Mayfair, Belgravia, Westminster, Knightsbridge, Kensington, Chelsea and Marylebone.

Rhodium's founder Dean Main intuitively understands the requirements of his burgeoning Ultra High Net Worth international client base. He speaks with pride of how the business he founded in 2011 now comprises a portfolio of £10billion, courtesy of its adherence to his core values of discretion, security, continuity and trust. Rhodium now oversees properties with an average value of £15million, from conceptual planning to full operation, across 40 developments, including Chiltern Place in Marylebone, Almacantar's The Bryanston, Hyde Park, Northacre's The Broadway and No. 1 Palace Street - opposite Buckingham Palace.

"We align ourselves with these ambitious schemes, taking the vision of the developer and providing options of high-end luxury service," Main explains. "Most management companies focus on the communal areas, but we don't distinguish between those and each individual residence. We manage the building, and we have a comprehensive 360-degree management solution tailored to each apartment. Buyers at this level have a completely different set of expectations and don't want to arrive at their London home and find a problem with the wifi or air con."

In terms of staff-to-resident ratio and 24/7 lifestyle facilitation, Rhodium organises the day-to-day running of these best-in-class properties with an attention to detail that is akin to service on a superyacht. "Every staff member is a Rhodium employee, recruited by our in-house specialist recruitment team 18 months in advance. Our staff are our ambassadors, whether they are security, valets, concierge, cleaners or spa/gym managers."

Within each scheme, the Rhodium team collaborates with developers at an early stage to consider the details inherent in communal layouts and the configuration of a property. The goal is to create a uniquely luxurious ambience suited to the residents' profile. "Everything is utterly bespoke, down to the unique fragrances we create for each development," Main says. "Luxury for the residents is knowing that nothing is impossible."

For more information, visit rh-45.com

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT, An interior at Northacre's prestigious No.1 Palace Street development opposite Buckingham Palace, managed by Rhodium; Dean Main; a 10th floor terrace on Almacantar's The Bryanston, Hyde Park



The Golden Age of Television Centre

Residents of Television Centre, the RIBA award-winning reimaging of the former home of British broadcasting, can revel in bespoke luxury residences in London's most talked-about new lifestyle destination, thanks to the visionary Architects' Series of premium apartments and penthouses



As the former home of British television, the circular architectural icon was a hub of energy, creativity and authority. Today those same qualities characterise the transformation of Television Centre into stunning new homes, live TV studios, offices and an unparalleled lifestyle destination. Situated just west of Notting Hill and Holland Park, only 13 minutes from Bond Street or 22 minutes from Bank via underground, and on the right side of London to dash to and from Heathrow and Oxfordshire, Television Centre has geographical convenience as well as luxury amenities including a 24/7 concierge and top-notch security.

On-site, there is Soho House (complete with vast gymnasium, pool, sauna and fitness studios for residents), Bluebird Cafe, and “sushi in the clouds” courtesy of Endo at the Rotunda. For culture, there’s Elephant West gallery and the Troubadour White City theatre; for shopping, Westfield, Europe’s largest retail centre, hosts 425 boutiques including a designer village and a 17-screen cinema. The aura of showbiz glitz remains with BBC Studioworks, where *The Graham Norton Show* is filmed.

Those on the lookout for a luxury home in London invariably want somewhere unique, inspiring and tailored to their needs. That’s why Paul Monaghan, the RIBA Stirling Prize-winning director of Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM), hand-picked a collection of Britain’s finest contemporary architects to join him in designing the most premium apartments atop the historic Helios and the newly built Crescent in the scheme, known as the Architect Series.

Each bespoke, one-off apartment reflects an individual

design philosophy, from Phil Coffey’s light-filled spaces which play on the concentric circles emanating from the Helios statue at the focal point of the development to Haptic’s Scandi aesthetic and contemporary warmth, with a clever utility cube at the centre. Piercy & Company use gorgeous marble and walnut timber to embody understated British craftsmanship while AHMM’s signature sculptural kitchen brings a sophisticated indoor/outdoor dynamic, capitalising on the ample natural light.

Television Centre offers alternative ways of living: the original Helios building features duplex apartments with bedrooms on the lower level and living spaces above; while the new Crescent building comprises lateral layouts that maximise views over the private courtyard gardens and Hammersmith Park. The penthouses are quite simply magnificent – and include an “eccentric and maximalist” space with gallery conjured by Archer Humphryes, the practice responsible for the Chiltern Firehouse.

Available now, two- and three-bedroom apartments from £2.9m; the final two penthouses are for sale, POA. For further information, please visit televisioncentre.com or contact the sales suite on 020 8811 8720

**CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP LEFT
Television Centre’s
iconic facade;
expansive views of
West London from
roof terraces;
reception room of
a Haptic-designed
apartment in
the Helios**



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NOTEBOOK

A monthly round-up of property news,
at home and abroad

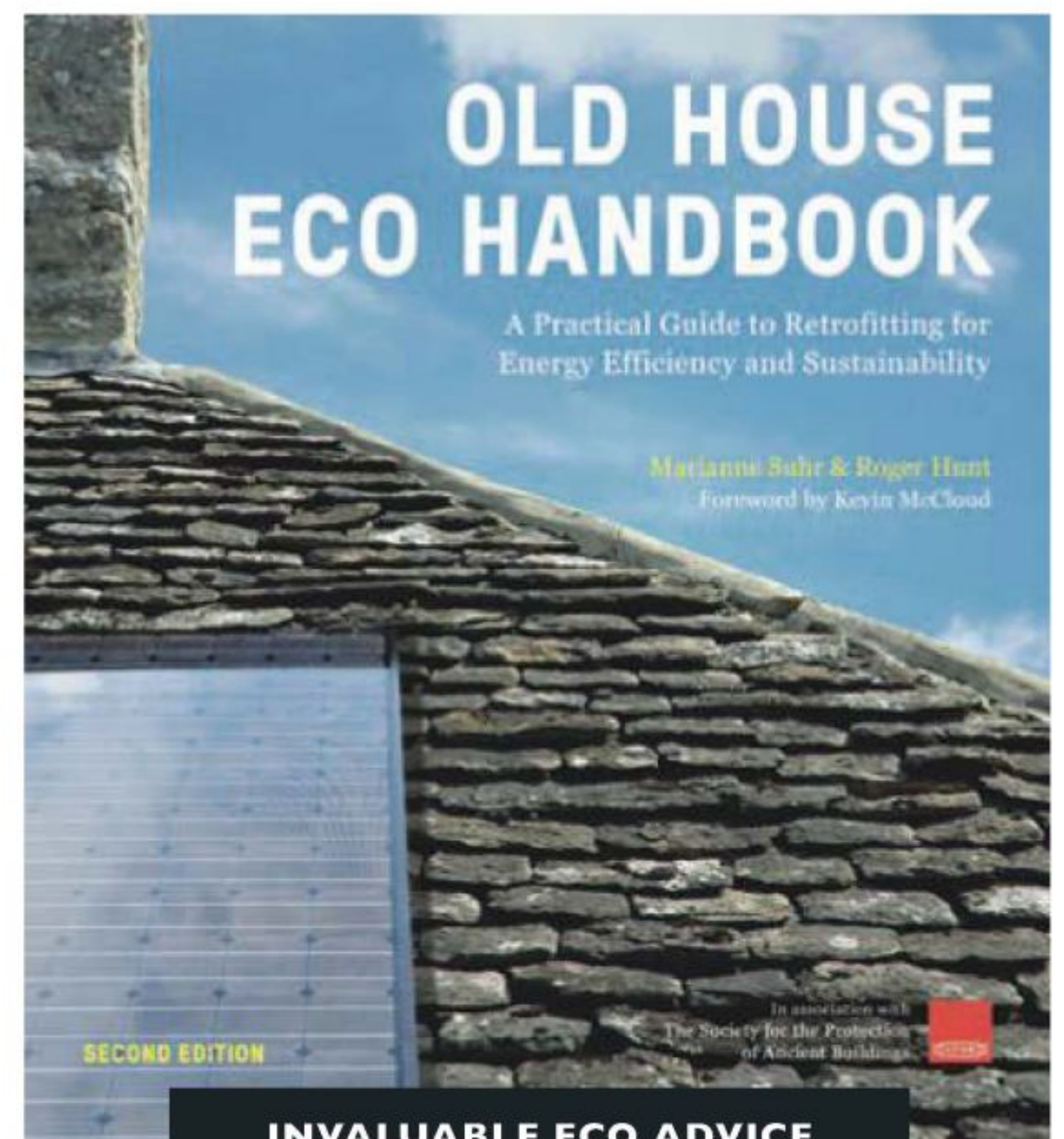
BY ROSEMARY BROOKE



PORTUGUESE PRIZE

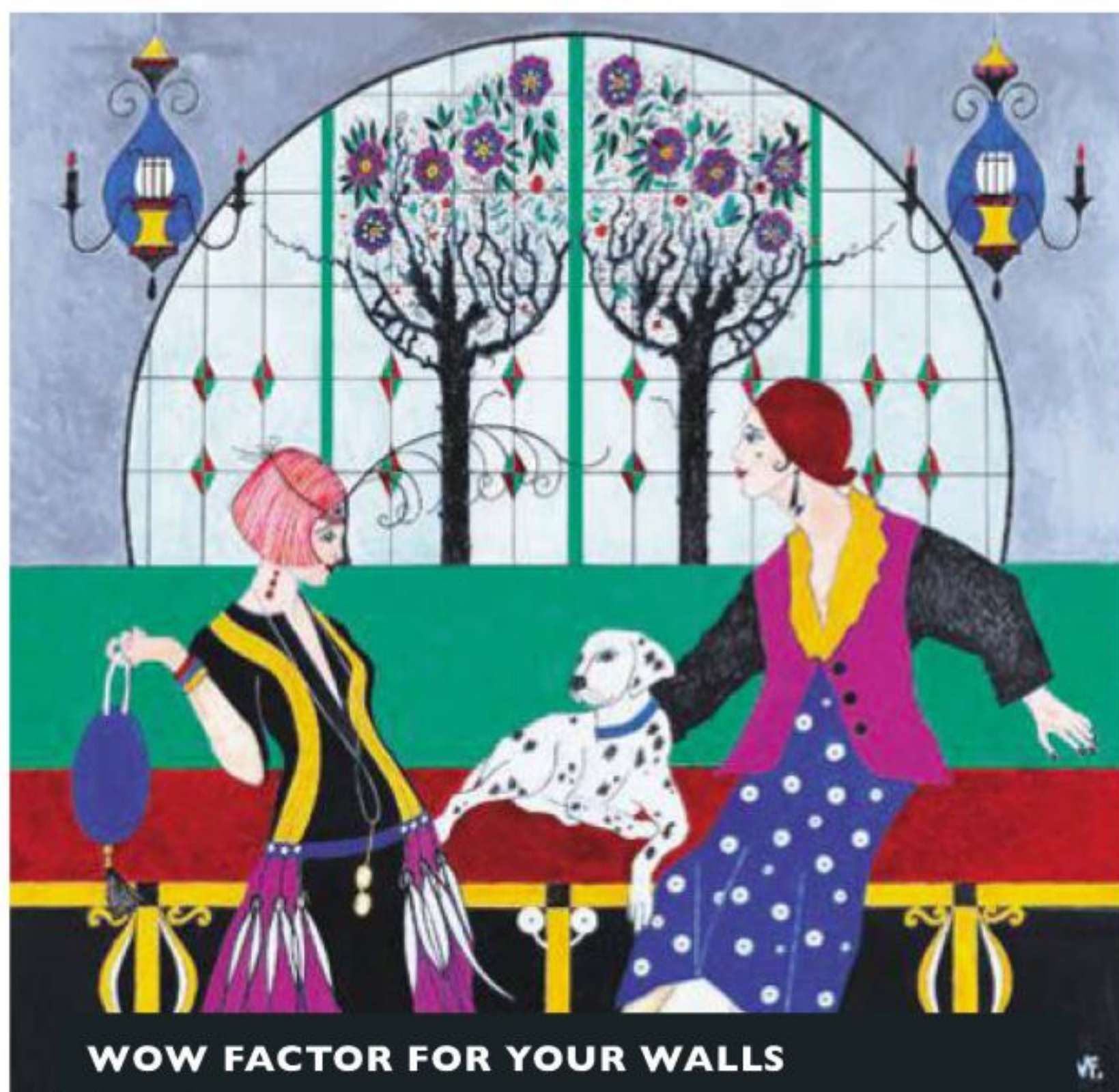
This spectacular coastal property in the Algarve is ready-made for entertaining, with huge living areas, outdoor fireplaces, three kitchens and a wine vault that accommodates over 400 bottles. Recently completed, the 5,000-square-foot villa is an ode to contemporary design and the latest technology – everything from the air conditioning to the sound system can be operated via your mobile phone. There's also a 12-metre swimming pool from which to admire the stunning sea views. €3.25 million.

Savills: 020 7016 3740



INVALUABLE ECO ADVICE

When Roger Hunt and Marianne Suhr released Old House Handbook, it quickly became a favourite with owners of period properties. A practical guide to the care and repair of historic buildings, it offered much-needed advice in a comprehensive and straightforward manner. A second edition of its follow-up, Old House Eco Handbook (£30; White Lion Publishing), is now available, providing up-to-date information on how to make your home greener.



WOW FACTOR FOR YOUR WALLS

If you're moving into a new property and are daunted by the bare walls, pop along to Milly Flamburiari's new exhibition, Pleasures Galore, at Gallery Eight in London's St James's. Full of colour and vivacity, Flamburiari's paintings span a range of subjects, from Jazz Age parties to exotic landscapes. Having studied at St Martins and then at Chelsea College of Art, she draws inspiration from the Art Deco and Art Nouveau periods to create vibrant paintings that radiate glamour. 8–14 December; 8 Duke Street, SW1Y; www.millyflamburiaripaintings.com

LEAFY MODERN LIVING IN WEST LONDON

This ambitious new development by Ballymore combines 876 apartments with new public spaces set to transform the heart of Brentford, including a host of shops and restaurants, and an extension of the Thames footpath. The 11-acre waterfront development is close to the leafy west London enclaves of Kew Gardens and Syon Park. There are regular trains from Brentford station to London Waterloo, while Heathrow is a short drive away. From £366,000 for a studio. www.thebrentfordproject.com



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Out to lunch!

This month with **Malcolm Gladwell**



At London's Brasserie Max, the literary thinker/podcaster practises what he publishes

Malcolm Gladwell and his massive throbbing brain walks into Brasserie Max at the Covent Garden Hotel off London's Seven Dials looking like an elderly tourist who's taken a wrong turn down Shoreditch High Street and ended up at a working men's strip club in Dalston with five per cent battery life and no GPS, discombobulated.

I'm already at our table – too eager and too smiley as I always am for these things, my *modus operandi* that of a springer spaniel in skinny black jeans waiting for his can of wet Pedigree Chum to slap into the bowl – while Gladwell brings with him a chilly, almost detached demeanour. And zero smiles. Not even a smize.

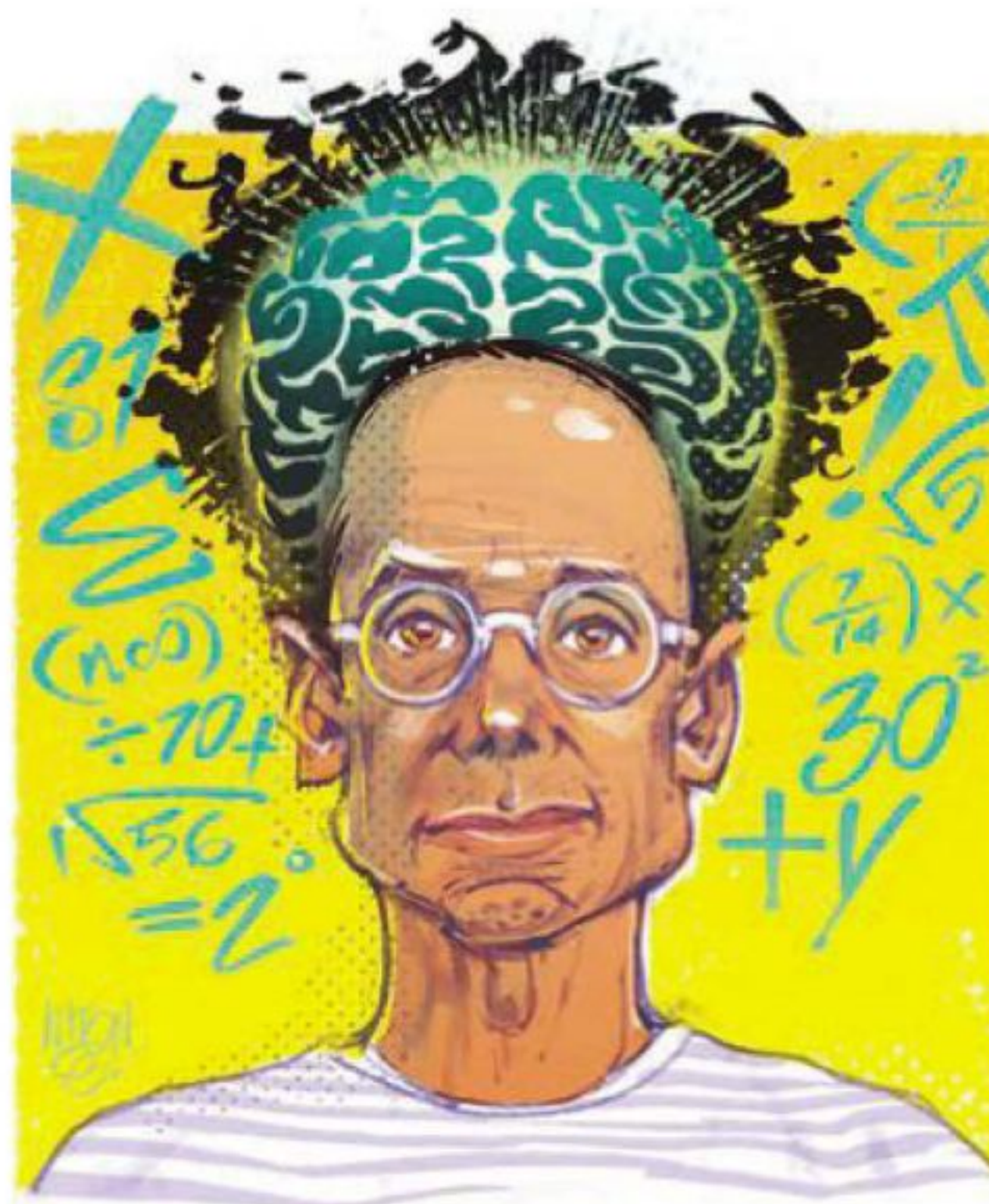
It's as if the author was followed into the room by his own weather system and, I'm sorry to say, MG fanboys, this entrance comes across as... arrogant, superior, very, very *busy*. And, rightly or wrongly, it gets my journalistic back up immediately. Fact: there's nothing worse than interviewing someone – man, woman or Brad Pitt in a burnt-orange sweater and aviators – who is already bored with their own promotional campaign.

If they can't muster the enthusiasm for a discussion about their work how am I supposed to? Say what you want about David Cameron and the two-week-long mini literary festival that was the launch of his autobiography, but while he may not know how to run a referendum he sure as hell knows how to sell a book.

Gladwell swiftly sits, mutters something about having to be somewhere in an hour and a half and then something else about getting over a stinking cold and then scans the menu like a man who wants to order the Dover sole and get this over with.

"Let's order so we can get talking," he suggests curtly, eye contact kept to an absolute minimum. The waitress comes to take our order: "Sparkling or still, sir?" "Tap," I insist, perhaps a little too quickly, although I don't think there was any chance Gladwell was going to go for the jeroboam of Whispering Angel...

Now, hold up a moment. Just before you think this column is out to trash the world's



You can feel the energy of his brain whirring, making atoms crackle

most beloved (not to say successful) literary pop-science thinker, a man whose life goal is to make sense out of entropy and find patterns amid the chaos, it turns out my initial knee-jerk reaction was wrong. There, I'll admit it. Well, not wrong so much as misunderstood, miscommunicated.

Like frozen pizza or a cold, empty bed in December, Malcolm Gladwell, you see, takes a little time to warm up. Not only that, but his personality is certainly more tightly coiled than other interviewees: he's a formal guy, someone, you might imagine, who would wear a shirt to catch a long-haul flight. That arrogant air... it's really just the way he's hard-wired. He's tense, tight, *taut*. You can feel the energy of that brain whirring, making atoms around his head crackle and pop.

So he's a bit of a stiff. He's understandably academic. So *what*? Well, it turns out the way we interact with one another or, rather, the way strangers interact and communicate with one another – and how our initial "reads" of these strangers can have devastating consequences – is the basis of the new book Gladwell's pushing, his sixth thus far.

Previous bestsellers – in a style he honed first at the *Washington Post*, then at the *New Yorker* – include *Outliers* (within which he argued it takes "10,000 hours" of practice to become an expert), *Blink* and *The Tipping Point*, which looked at the magic moment trends and social behaviour "tip" and spread like wildfire.

This latest book is called *Talking To Strangers* (Allen Lane, £20) and over several "episodes" rather than chapters – a nod, one suspects, to his new fruitful life as a podcast host on *Revisionist History* and entrepreneur; he owns a podcasting company called Pushkin Industries – Gladwell discusses sometimes infamous encounters between strangers that allow him to illuminate a wider meaning about why humans behave as they do in certain situations.

One particularly poignant episode at the front of the book, for example, focuses on the case of a black woman, Sandra Bland, who in July 2015 was stopped by a white Texan police officer over a minor traffic violation. There was an incident over Bland lighting a cigarette, then her refusal to put it out. She was arrested and three days after being taken into custody she took her own life.

So far, so Gladwellian, taking a big, complex issue – he also tackles college drinking, Amanda Knox and Bernie Madoff – dissecting it and applying a theory to help us understand the unfurling chaos and common behaviour. In the book the main theory is something described as "truth default theory" – the idea that, at first, our go-to mode is to believe what someone says – a theory that was developed not by Gladwell, in fact, but by a US academic called Timothy Levine.

"We are all put in positions, much like this interview, for example," explains Gladwell when the ice over our conversation finally thaws, "where we are thrust in front of one another: people with differing assumptions, perspectives and backgrounds. But it's the powers that influence the equilibrium between two strangers that I am interested in and what this book is really about."

And with that, my fish arrives. You know what? Gladwell and I got on famously. **GG**

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CHRIS HEMSWORTH



Please turn the page to view Supplement

2020 **GQ** Watch AND JEWELLERY

Your essential guide to the world of watches

GQ Watch Guide 2020

Our pick of the
best new models

Compiled by
Simon de Burton

How to buy an heirloom

Story by Emily Wright



Profile

How Gérald Genta created the grail watch

Story by Nick Foulkes

Exclusive Report

Disruption as standard

The rise of the microbrand

Story by Charlie Burton

Inventing the future

From e-commerce to the environment,
the watch brands breaking with the past



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BRITISH GQ Watch 2020 AND JEWELLERY

Your essential guide to the world of watches

Editor's Letter

As a new decade approaches, we thought we'd use the occasion of the 13th edition of our annual watch title to take stock of how the industry has been developing in the 21st century. After all, half a century ago, it was assumed to be unassailable, having perfected the dustproof, waterproof timepiece that would go on to dominate the market. Then, quartz arrived to destabilise the centuries-old world of fine watchmaking and the last decade offered a further threat in the shape of connected watches and the rise of e-tailing and Instagram. The industry has had a lot to contend with. So we've shone a light on how it's doing. On page 43, Tracey Llewellyn investigates the brands that are looking forward rather than merely repeating the past; we investigate the social responsibility at the heart of a business that can convincingly argue it's one of the more sustainable, thanks to a "dust to dust" lifespan; and Nick Foulkes celebrates the mastermind of the design-led developments that defined the Seventies and beyond, Gérald Genta. And whether you devour it here or online at GQ.co.uk, don't miss the 2020 edition of the GQ Watch Guide, starting on page 67 and compiled by Simon de Burton. Who knows? The watch-making legends of the next 50 years might be there...

Bill Prince Editor, GQ Watch And Jewellery

Contributors

Under the dial and all over the industry: meet the beater beat



Tracey Llewellyn

'The Watchmaking Trailblazers'
Working for newspapers including the *Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, Tracey Llewellyn has specialised in watches for the past 12 years, starting with *QP* magazine before moving on to launch and edit *Revolution UK*. Llewellyn is the watch editor of the *Telegraph*. She's perfectly placed, then, to share her thoughts on which brands are doing the most to move the story of watchmaking on today.

Emily Wright

'Reader, I Bought Him A...'
"I thought that picking a watch for my husband's 40th birthday would take me a couple of weeks," says GQ contributor Emily Wright. "Let's just say it was a good job I started the search early! It was a huge emotional investment, as well as a financial one, and I underestimated the pressure I would feel to select the 'perfect' timepiece." Turn to page 40 to see how she got on.



Rachel Felder

'Every Product Should Be Exciting'
Meeting the CEO of Ulysse Nardin and Girard-Perregaux, writer Rachel Felder was impressed: "Patrick Pruniaux is a grounded executive who truly works collaboratively, a listener who values his staff's opinion and, perhaps mostly, someone whose enthusiasm for his job seems to infuse his thoughts on the watch industry with a sincere passion." Read Felder's interview on page 47.



Charlie Burton

'Disruption As Standard'
"I noticed that my Instagram feed was full of ads for watch start-ups," says GQ's Senior Commissioning Editor. "It made me curious: what exactly are all these companies and are their watches actually any good?" Kick-start your understanding of this new wave of dial names on page 38.






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FIRST TIME

Heritage

Patek on parade

The Geneva horologist continues to set standards (and records) 180 years on

Story by **Bill Prince**



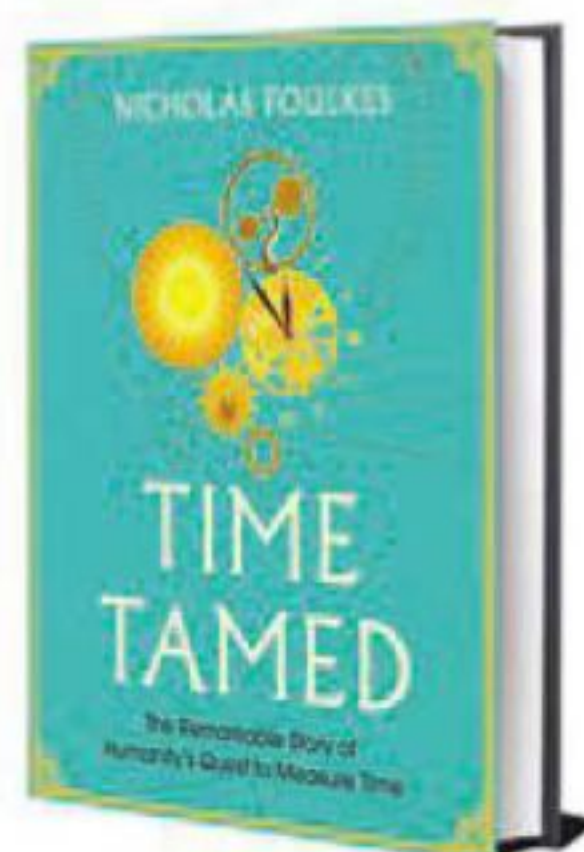
**Patek Philippe
Aquanaut Ref
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Special Edition.**
patek.com

For some, it might feel as if, horologically speaking, it's Patek Philippe's world and other brands merely get to live in it. Consider: not only has the family-owned Geneva company just posted record-breaking sales here in the UK, but last month in Singapore it also unveiled a ten-room, 1,800 square metre exhibition dedicated to celebrating its singular story – past, present and future. Pulling together examples from its own museum, the complete 2019 collection, as well as unique pieces designed to mark Singapore's bicentennial (including a hot-red take on the currently on-fire Aquanaut, *left*), the Watch Art Grand Exhibition also showcased rare handcrafts and the one-of-a-kind Calibre 89, once the most complicated portable timepiece ever created.

Meanwhile, Christie's is set for a blockbuster Geneva sale this month, writes *Simon de Burton*, having consigned two ultra-rare vintage Patek Philippe wristwatches with a potential combined value of more than £15 million. The first is a 1953 Reference 2523 dual-crown World Time model, one of just seven pink-gold examples made and the only one bearing the signature of Milan retailer Gobbi. It could realise up to £11m, while a 1927 minute repeater made for the celebrated Patek Philippe collector Henry Graves Jr is tipped to fetch £2.5m to £4m. It is said to have been the first minute repeater owned by Graves, who famously commissioned the Patek "Supercomplication" pocket watch knocked down for £19m in 2014 to retain its position as the most expensive timepiece ever sold at auction. The sale takes place on 11 November.

Patek Philippe showcased its one-of-a-kind Calibre 89

On the shelf: horological hardbacks you won't want to miss



Time Tamed: The Remarkable Story Of Humanity's Quest To Measure Time by **Nicholas Foulkes** (*Simon & Schuster, £25*) Long before we became a society of "clock watchers", timepieces served an even more important function: reinforcing

the "magical powers" of ancient rulers who sought to prove their dominion over their subjects' daily lives, only much later calibrating our existence to the hour, minute and – ultimately – second. It's a story underpinned by the

search for prestige and power that *GQ* contributor and author Foulkes tells with considerable panache, drawing on science, art and, of course, history to unravel the spellbinding story of humanity's horological evolution.



The Watch: A Twentieth-Century Style History by **Alexander Barter** (*Prestel, £45*) Former Sotheby's consultant Barter follows the evolution of the wristwatch from the first converted pocket watches through to the "quartz revolution" of 50 years ago, taking in the futuristic designs created by some of today's niche independent makers.

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Ambassadors

Tudor queen Lady Gaga wakes up the watch world

Rolex's stablemate adds pop's agitator-in-chief to its 'Born To Dare' campaign

Story by **Bill Prince**

Can a watch brand ever be considered "woke"? The term that gained traction around the time of Me Too and Time's Up might seem at odds with the ultra-conservative watch business, but Tudor – the Rolex-owned business whose strapline since relaunching in 2014 has been 'Born To Dare' – begs to differ.

Having initially harnessed connoisseurs and collectors alike in communicating the "brand story" behind Rolex's sturdy if previously unsung sibling, Tudor took the decision in 2017 to attach "rocket boosters" to its marketing plan, a not-without-risks strategy that saw Lady Gaga and David Beckham join as spokespeople. And while Beckham has concentrated on highlighting the go-anywhere qualities of Hans Wilsdorf's uncluttered tool watches (training with a fellow Tudor "face", world free-diving champion Morgan Bourc'h, in spite of a long-standing fear of open water), Lady Gaga's own Grammy- and Oscar-winning legitimacy is underscoring Tudor's quiet kudos as an authentic Swiss brand that's more than capable of holding its own.

The latter's relationship was cemented in a short video that showed Lady Gaga in musical conversation/competition with herself, representing the sense of duality she deploys in *Enigma*, her current residency in Las Vegas. Here the superstar performs



Tudor ambassador Lady Gaga on stage for her Enigma residency at Park Theater, Las Vegas, December 2018

her hits beside an animated alter ego intended to guide the singer and her audience through the perils and pitfalls of her success – a success underlined in her decision to supplement *Enigma's* heavyweight theatrical performances with standalone jazz sets held in the same venue through 2020, in *Lady Gaga Jazz & Piano*.

And if few would disagree with the artist's onstage sign-off – "Be kind or fuck off" – Lady Gaga nevertheless represents a bracing break with watch industry tradition: a fully

"awoken" individual who has perhaps done as much as any other for the advancement of equal rights. Potentially, then, she's a polarising figure, but one a Tudor spokesperson feels is especially attuned to the brand. "She was extremely into the unique structure [of the company; Tudor is Foundation-owned and the Foundation gives back to the community]. And that's perhaps why she hadn't done a watch partnership before. It was Tudor's philosophy that was the "win" in "win-win" for her."

Jazzin' with AP: Time and music collide

Since 2010, Audemars Piguet (AP) has partnered in preserving the vast archive held by the Montreux Jazz Festival – an audiovisual treasure trove comprising more than 11,000 hours of video and more than 6,000 hours of audio recordings originally assembled by the festival's

founder, the late Claude Nobs. An interdisciplinary effort involving Montreux Sounds and the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale De Lausanne, it remains an important and ambitious project, usefully chiming with AP's development of the Supersonnerie minute repeater (launched in 2016 as

part of its ongoing Royal Oak Concept series). And now the Le Brassus brand is doubling down on the association, with the announcement of a further integration into the world-renowned festival, encompassing the various activities enshrined in Nobs' global legacy, from a sibling event held

in Japan to the Montreux Jazz Academy and Montreux Talent Awards. "Music is a field that touches everybody, so it's very important for AP," says its CEO, François-Henry Bennahmias. "But music is also my true passion. So on the personal side, I have been waiting for this a long time."

Quincy Jones at Montreux Jazz Festival, Switzerland, July 2017





TIME, A HERMÈS OBJECT.



Arceau, L'heure de la lune
Time flies to the moon.



Hermès

Marquet forces

Three new watches spend their inheritance

Story by **Bill Prince**

Ranging from silk to leather, Hermès' mastery of materials is only matched by its felicity with form, evidenced by the unusual contours of its classic Arceau watch, created by Henri d'Origny in 1978 and subtly reinterpreted in 2012. Fitted with asymmetrical lugs redolent of stirrups, the 41mm white-gold case is here further emboldened by the use of tulipwood to create a dial design transposed from a scarf motif. Each dial takes three weeks to create, ensuring the Arceau Astrologie Nouvelle is a limited edition of eight. It's powered by an in-house self-winding movement and fitted with a black alligator strap.

£47,130. hermes.com



Photographs David Marchon; Gilles Pernet

Vacheron Constantin Historiques Cornes De Vache 1955 steel edition

Plundering the archives is nothing new, but as the oldest watchmaker in continuing production, it's fair to say Vacheron Constantin has more to offer than most. Case in point: its Historiques collection, which this year brought back the reference 6087 from 1955, featuring distinctive cow horn-shaped lugs. Fitted with a hand-wound chronograph movement, the 38.5mm steel case is fitted with a brown strap produced by Milanese leather goods brand Serapian. £32,900. vacheron-constantin.com



Louis Vuitton Tambour Damier Graphite Chronograph

The platform for a range of options (including its first foray into connected watches, the Horizon), LV's drum-like Tambour case has become a house icon. Now it's been teamed with another: the dial of this 41.5mm quartz model features its Damier Canvas pattern engraved and printed on the dial and repeated on the stainless-steel caseback. £3,000. louisvuitton.com





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Harrods



Bremont's latest limited-edition chronometer is made using materials taken from the H-4 Hercules



Time Flies

One giant's flight... one great watch

Story by Bill Prince

Often cited as reclusive billionaire and aviation pioneer Howard Hughes' grand folly, the H-4 Hercules military aircraft (dubbed the Spruce Goose despite its birchwood construction) was a far-sighted solution to an obstacle the US had found itself facing in supplying aid to war-torn Europe – U-boats in the north Atlantic. Sadly, commissioned too late to make a contribution, it flew once – in 1947 – after which the largest aircraft by dimension ever built was maintained until Hughes' death, then mothballed in Long Beach, California, in 1980. An aero enthusiast bought it in 1991, took it apart and reassembled it at the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in Oregon, where it resides today, intact in all its glory apart from a small hole in its fuselage to allow access to awestruck aviation nuts. The

small incision gave up enough of the Spruce Goose's history-making materials to allow Bremont to produce a further limited edition in its famed aeronautical tributes (last year, it marked the 50th anniversary of Concorde's debut flight in similar fashion). In addition to birch, The Bremont H-4 Hercules Limited Edition Chronometer includes cloth from the fuselage and scraps of the beach balls that filled each wing in case of ditching (despite it being a seaplane) are used in the packaging. Three hundred models in black stainless steel will be available, with 75 each of rose-gold and platinum versions. However, in this instance, the choice of metals is beside the point: fly with your Bremont Hercules H-4 and you'll be responsible for returning to the skies a true icon of aviation. From £9,495. bremont.com

Douglas Bader remembered...

Memorably played by Kenneth Moore in the rousing 1956 biopic *Reach For The Sky*, double-amputee RAF fighter ace Sir Douglas Bader (1910-1982) has long been a byword for British indomitability. An equally effective campaigner for disability rights after the war, his efforts have been recognised in this limited-edition Avi-8 Hawker Hurricane Bader Chronograph. Available in three colourways in editions of 242 (reflecting Bader's 242 Squadron), each features a dial inscribed with his signature and design elements drawn from the Hawker Hurricanes he flew in combat. Ten per cent of the proceeds from sales will go to the Douglas Bader Foundation. From £225. avi-8.com



IWC spurs on the Silver Spitfire

Since early August, when their fully renovated and specially modified 1943 Spitfire MJ271 took off from Goodwood Aerodrome on the first leg of its round-the-world "longest flight", pilots Steve Boulton-Brooks and Matt Jones have been navigating a westerly route involving 27,000 miles of flying and touchdowns in 30 countries. The pair are due to arrive back at Goodwood in early December. Supporting their endeavour to shine a light on one of aviation's most important aircraft is IWC, which is marking the marathon undertaking with a special edition of its Timezoner Pilot's Watch. Fitted with its own single-action, bezel-mounted world time function, the Spitfire Edition "The Longest Flight" is limited to 250 pieces. £11,450. iwc.com





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Tech

How Apple found fitness...

And became the biggest watch brand on the planet

Story by **Robert Leedham**

Back in September 2014, the launch of the first Apple Watch was designed to be a cultural event. "It's as much about personal technology as it is style and taste," proclaimed Tim Cook at its grand unveiling.

So the likes of Beyoncé and Karl Lagerfeld were seeded all-gold editions of the device estimated to be worth £18,500. A partnership with Hermès was established, in which Apple shared with the fashion house details of its latest creation a year in advance of its launch, an unprecedented move. Even Tom Ford transformed one into a pocket watch for the launch of his London Collections: Men SS16 show.

In September, the video that heralded the arrival of the Apple Watch Series 5 was very different. One man told the story of how he'd halved the size of his trouser waist with the help of its activity tracker. It showed a child with autism who'd fallen back in love with cross-country running after using it and a woman whose pregnancy was saved after the Watch detected an irregular heart rate. "It's not something you think of: your watch saving your life," proclaimed another average Joe.

Despite the Series 5's design remaining almost identical to the original Watch, it is a very different product. Jony Ive, its lead designer, departed Apple earlier this year, having been with the company since 1992. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Ive's vision for the product was that of a fashion accessory, whereas other members of the company viewed it as an "extension of the iPhone". It doesn't take a genius to see which side won out.

Regardless of its growing pains, the Watch



has quickly become a phenomenal success on its own terms. By September 2017, Apple had added built-in GPS for run-tracking, water-resistance up to 50 metres for swimming, as well as developing much-improved heart rate and workout apps. Other smartwatch makers were quick to follow Apple's example: Fitbit's most recent Versa 2 bet the house on sleep tracking, while Samsung's latest new Galaxy Watch Active2 is a similarly fitness-focused alternative for use with Android phones.

More significantly, Apple had overtaken Rolex to become the world's largest watchmaker and the company continues to lead the smartwatch market at a canter.

So what comes next? Truthfully, the Watch Series 5 feels very close to what Apple originally envisioned for the product. It's a great fitness tracker, it's a great accompaniment to your iPhone and now it's a great watch too. Which sounds like a strange thing to proclaim, but that's the idea

behind its always-on display, which means you no longer have to turn the Watch towards your face to illuminate its screen.

Tellingly, Apple has reintroduced a range of luxe customisable options for the Series 5, including sleek titanium and glossy ceramic cases, as well as another Hermès edition. These designs weren't made for the everyday folk featured in the launch video or the catering staff, personal trainers and health workers you so often see wearing a Watch for its practicality. Just as Apple managed to reinvent its smartphone business with the £1,000 iPhone X, don't be surprised if the Watch's future spells a return to high fashion.

From £399. apple.com

+ Apple Watch Series 5: What's new?

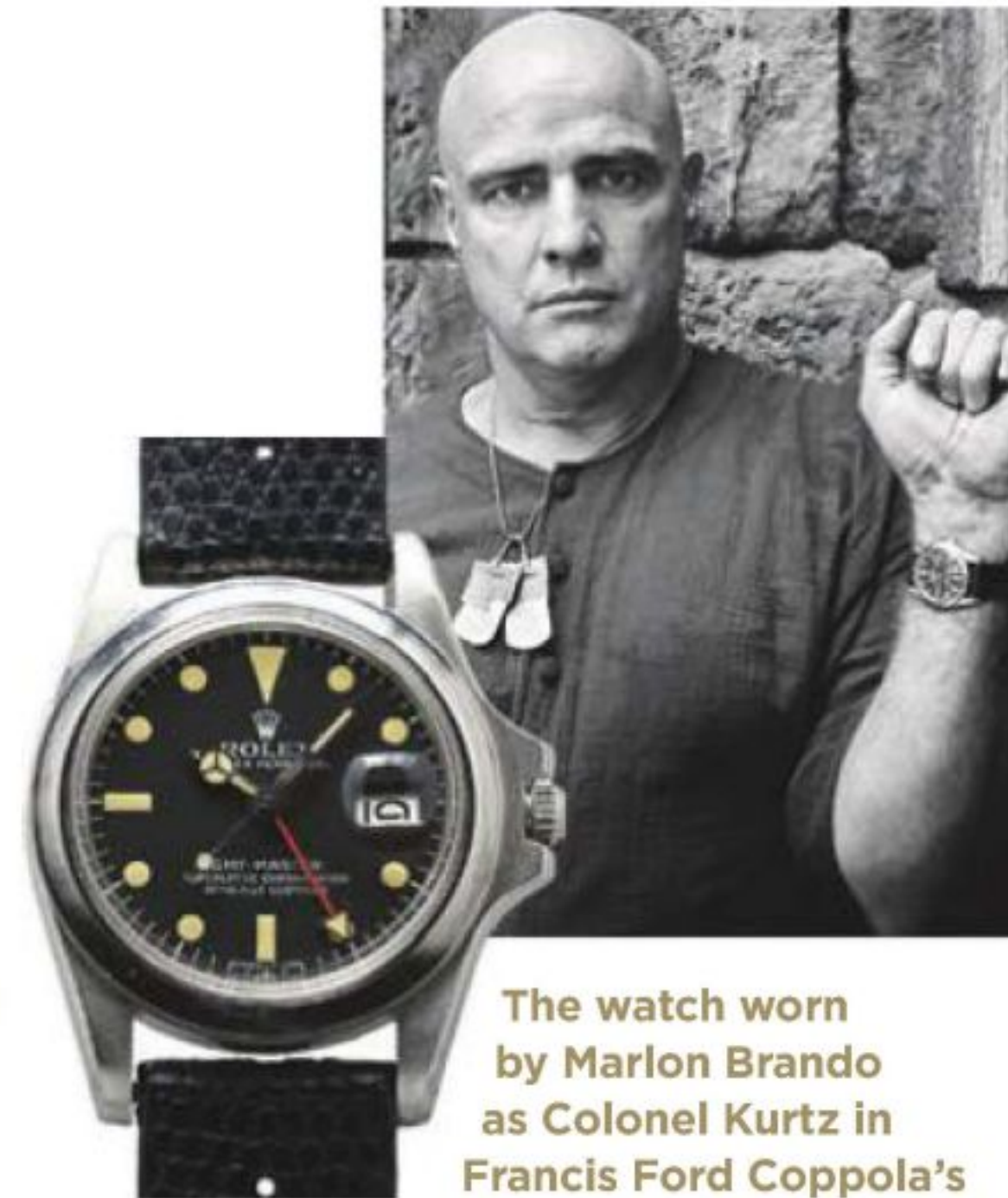
A redesigned, always-on display ensures the time and other favourite stats are constantly in view from your wrist.

An onboard digital compass ensures you're facing the right direction when following instructions from the Maps app.

New titanium and ceramic case options bring a fresh sense of class to the device.

The arrival of WatchOS 6 allows apps to be installed directly to the device and tracks your activity and fitness levels over the year.

+ Auction update



The watch worn by Marlon Brando as Colonel Kurtz in Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* is

expected to fetch a six-figure sum when it crosses the block at Phillips, New York on 10 December. The 1972 Rolex GMT-Master remained in the actor's possession until he gifted it to his daughter Petra in 1995. Brando was asked to remove the watch during filming because it stood out too much. He refused, but compromised by discarding the bezel – which remains absent. The watch will be sold to raise money for a children's charity.

More watches from the 800-strong Masterworks Of Time collection will go on sale at Sotheby's Geneva on 11 November after the house achieved an estimate-busting £9.6 million for the first 150 items in July. The star lot is set to be a 1901 pink-gold perpetual calendar minute-repeating chronograph clock watch with moon phases by A Lange & Sohne that's tipped to realise up to £550,000. The collection was assembled over a 50-year period by the late German billionaire Erivan Haub – former boss of the giant Tengelmann Group retail chain – who died in 2018.

On 9 November, the eighth edition of the biennial *Only Watch (onlywatch.com)* charity auction will be held. Since its founding in 2005, it's raised more than £30m towards research into Duchenne muscular dystrophy and other neuromuscular diseases. This year, 50 watches will be offered, with four brands (MB&F, L'Épée, De Bethune and Urwerk) collaborating on projects. The sale will be staged by Christie's at Geneva's Four Seasons Hotel Des Bergues.

July saw Phillips launch its own watch boutique at its galleries in Berkeley Square, London. Called Phillips Perpetual, the platform promises to offer the finest collectors' timepieces in custom-built surroundings. The space also serves as a venue for watch shows and private selling exhibitions, as well as acting as the London base of Singer Reimagined, the high-end brand collaboration between rock musician Rob Dickinson's California-based Porsche upgrade business and one-time Panerai designer Marco Borraccino. **Simon de Burton GQ**

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Tales From The Industry

A GENIUS CALLED GÉRALD

From the Royal Oak to the Nautilus, one artist defined Seventies horology and invented the celebrity watchmaker. How he did it is a story for all time

Story by Nick Foulkes

Gérald Genta presents a design in gold with 30-carat diamonds in Geneva, 25 September 1979

It used to be said that life began at 40 but it was a fortnight before his 39th birthday that Gérald Genta received a phone call that would change his life.

It was 4pm on the day before the Swiss Industries Fair, the predecessor of Baselworld, was due to open. Gérald Genta picked up the receiver. It was Georges Golay, the far-sighted, autocratic managing director of Audemars Piguet, the watch company at which Genta was under contract as a designer, or stylist, as the profession was then known. Although not a member of staff, the brand had first refusal of any designs that he came up with and it needed him to come up with something fast: the French and Italian distributors required an exceptional steel watch. (In the early Seventies, the Swiss watch industry was still booming, Paris was still the global capital of chic and the Italian market was hugely influential in shaping trends in wristwatches.)

The rendering duly presented the following day was not so much exceptional as downright radical; a watch of a type not seen before. Big by the standards of its day, it was characterised by a complex bracelet that was totally integrated into the watch head. The octagonal bezel was studded with countersunk hexagonal screw heads of white gold, the only precious metal on a steel watch that would prove to be more costly than most. It was everything that Audemars Piguet, then a maker of classic slim gold watches, was not.

Golay was sceptical, but he was also a businessman, and when the Italian and French markets agreed to take 400 pieces each, it was decided to proceed, although even then there was talk of capping production at 1,000 pieces.

The launch at the Basel Fair of 1972 was a sensation. Martin Wehrli, now retired, was a young sales executive at AP. He was on the stand and once told me how senior figures in the industry would come over to offer their congratulations and then, as they walked away, he overheard some expressing the hope

that this radical design would bankrupt the company and they could then buy it.

Of course, the opposite was true. The quartz tsunami struck Switzerland and many of those who had thought the Royal Oak would destroy AP were themselves put out of business. Generations-old businesses were shuttered and yet AP was safe in its octagonal lifeboat. Indeed, to cope with surging demand it needed more workshop space so urgently that planning consent for the extension at the back of the factory had to be sought retrospectively.

At the time it was just one more design among many thousands that Genta had already made in a career that would see him produce up to 50 in a day. A seemingly inexhaustible supply of watch designs was just waiting to flow through his pencils and brushes and onto the page. He never looked at other watch designs. Instead he took his inspiration from the world

‘Gérald had a very hard childhood. He sought escape and, aged eight, found it in painting’



Genta's original Royal Oak, designed for Audemars Piguet in 1970, was the first luxury watch to be made from steel

around him, from nature, from architecture or, in the case of the Royal Oak, a childhood memory of crossing the Mont Blanc Bridge in Geneva and seeing a man being sealed into a scaphander – an old-fashioned diving suit.

It was the design that would make him the most famous watch designer of his age, one that would bring him his share of the better things in life – fame, fast cars, cigars, elegant suits and the admiration of sovereigns and sultans – so it is fitting that it sprung from a memory of a time when he had experienced great hardship.

His grandfather had come to Geneva at the end of the 19th century and established a thriving grocery business. However, his father was not so fortunate. Gérald was born in 1931 and grew up during the turbulent years of the Great Depression and the Second World War. “I believe he stopped school when he was 14 or 15 because his parents were very poor. Gérald came from an incredibly poor background,” recalls his widow, Evelyne, today. “His father was Italian. His mother was Swiss. The father worked at a series of small jobs and when his mother went blind, Gérald helped his parents, doing all sorts of odd jobs. He really had a very, very, very hard childhood.” He also had to put up with prejudice, even one of his teachers called him a “dirty Italian”. Unsurprisingly, he sought escape and, from the age of about eight, found it in painting.

Leaving school, he studied jewellery-making and earned money creating silver portraits of babies for new mothers, but this work hardly appealed to him and throwing his jewellery tools into the Rhône, he looked around for other lines of work through which he could express his creativity.

A self-portrait from this time, painted in a style clearly influenced by his great hero Picasso, shows a handsome young rebel of the beatnik variety, tousled mane of hair, open-necked shirt, pipe jutting from the mouth, eyes fearlessly engaging with the viewer.

He considered a career in couture, but Geneva was not a city of fashion. However, it was the city of watches. At the time the role of watch designer was virtually nonexistent. The famous houses would be shown cases by case makers and dials by dial makers often thinking of little more than “clothing” the movement. Genta started producing designs and then hawking them around the watch houses.

“He would tell me how he would drive to [the watchmaking towns of] Le Brassus, La-Chaux-De-Fonds, Bienne, and all of those places,” says Evelyne. “He approached every single watch company: Piaget, Corum, Audemars, Omega, Vacheron, all of them, sold his designs for ten to 20 Swiss francs, coming back when he had 1,000 Swiss francs.” >>

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Between 1983 and 1999, working with his wife, Evelyn, Genta brought his eponymous brand to market. For all his remarkable innovations in watch design, Genta valued his painting just as highly; (below) Patek Philippe Nautilus Ref 5711/1A-010, £23,440. patek.com

>> His first break came in the early Fifties with the design of the Polorouter for Universal, a watch for the pilots of the airline SAS, which had recently started flying a trans-Arctic route. Universal was a big deal in the Fifties, but Omega was even bigger and it was a brand Genta would work with until the Eighties, creating the avant-garde titanium-and-gold Seamaster Polaris and the Louis Brandt collection, named after the firm's founder, in 1984. According to the brand's archivist, Petros Protopapas, Genta's touch was evident on the brand's prestige model, the Constellation, which launched in 1952. "Some of the early Constellation models' most iconic features are attributed to the designer's rich imagination: the pie-pan dial [it looked like an inverted pie pan]; the fascination with the contrast of straight line-based shapes such as octagons and squares within circular base shapes; the form of the dials' indices; and the shape of the case lugs.

"One of the very first designs Mr Genta worked on at Omega was the Constellation 14900. This model featured one more design element that collectors and scholars alike attribute to Mr Genta: the 'Beads Of Rice' bracelet he originally proposed and designed for use within the Seamaster line."

Genta continued to work on the Constellation well into the Sixties, redefining it during its first important face-lift. This features the symmetrical, curved case known to collectors as the "C-Shape", with the case and lugs indistinguishable, cradling the strap in their embrace.

"The 'C-Shape' Constellation might be the very first complete design Mr Genta created for Omega, as it seems that before 1964 the designer worked on an almost piece-by-piece contract," explains Protopapas. "This saw him work on separate parts, with the brand's in-house designers being responsible for combining the separate entities into one coherent design and product."

In retrospect, it is possible to see Genta moving towards the total integration of case

'I told the head waiter, "Bring me paper and a pencil." And I designed the Nautilus'



and bracelet and, although designs were not officially credited to individual designers at that time, the arrival of integrated case and bracelet designs in the Omega catalogue at the end of the Sixties cannot be unconnected with Genta's work for the company: a prelude to the Royal Oak.

By the time he received the call about the Royal Oak, he had established himself as a respected and successful designer working sub rosa for many design houses, much in the way that Karl Lagerfeld was doing at the same time for fashion houses.

After 20 years of hard work he became an overnight success. With success came confidence and by the mid-Seventies he had arrived as a virtuoso at the top of his profession, capable of sketching a bestselling watch that would endure for decades in a matter of minutes. In an interview a couple of years before his death, he recalled the circumstances surrounding the initial sketches of what would become the Patek Philippe Nautilus. "It is a watch that I designed during the Basel Trade Fair. I was at the restaurant of a hotel and some people from Patek were sitting in one corner of the dining hall while I was sitting alone in the other corner. I told the head waiter, 'Bring me a piece of paper and a pencil. I want to design something.' And I designed the Nautilus while observing the people from Patek eating... It was a sketch that I completed in five minutes." >>



A childhood memory of a man in an old-fashioned diving suit inspired the Royal Oak

Royal Oak Perpetual Calendar Openworked, £126,000. audemarspiguet.com

>> The inspiration was once again maritime, a porthole; and given that Philippe Stern, the visionary boss of Patek Philippe for more than 30 years from the mid-Seventies, was a highly accomplished, prize-winning yachtsman, the design found favour. Stern, the shrewdest man in the industry, had seen the impact of the Royal Oak and after a couple of years of development spent overcoming the difficulty of constructing what was an unusually involved case design, the Nautilus made its debut in 1976. At the time of writing, more than 40 years later, it is the hottest steel sports watch on the market.

The same year also saw the debut of another Genta icon, the redesigned IWC. "He was in charge of the Ingénieur SL project and he worked closely with the case maker Piquerez to make this watch," explains David Seyffer, curator of IWC's museum in Schaffhausen. It is also part of the oral tradition at IWC that he was involved with another project around this time, the IWC Yacht Club II. "The design looks very, very similar to other Gérald Genta watches," says Seyffer, "but unfortunately there are no surviving documents from this project in our archives."

By now Genta wanted to do more than merely design for others. "It's the client who has the renown," he said later. "I had to wait very patiently before the public could learn that it was me who had made the Royal Oak of Audemars Piguet, etc. We don't dare say it when we have done it but, afterwards, it gradually becomes known to the public."

He had established his own company in 1969 and even though by the late Seventies the Swiss watch industry was in crisis, he wanted to put his name to his designs. Thanks to his friendship with Osvaldo Patrizzi, who had established an auction house specialising in watches, he came into contact with connoisseurs and collectors who appreciated fine watchmaking and had the wherewithal to invest in it.

"His first skeletonised, minute-repeating, self-winding wristwatch was made for one of my collectors in 1979 or 1980 and was the beginning of a very long line of such timepieces," recalls Patrizzi.

This watch was to establish a pattern that would define the second half of Genta's career. Such was the fecundity of his mind that he created more designs than brands could produce; moreover, he was able to work at all levels and even designed for Timex and Seiko. But when he had the chance, he preferred to work for rich patrons who, like the courts of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, could afford to commission work from the leading artists and craftsmen of the time.

At the end of the Seventies and the beginning of the Eighties, as Europe and America succumbed to energy crises, inflation and recession, it was in the East that these patrons were to be found, whether the rising industrialists of Japan, the sultans of southeast Asia or the princes of oil-rich Arabia.

"It was really the departure point of luxury watches in this part of the world," explains Michael Tay of The Hour Glass, Singapore's leading watch retailer, which was founded by Tay's family in 1979. "It was the first boutique in Singapore's then-new shopping district Orchard Road. I recall my parents started working with Gérald Genta in 1981 and in 1982 we launched the watch brand in southeast Asia. There weren't

many specialist watch-only retailers and The Hour Glass was the first of its kind; until then watches were sold with optical products and white goods, as part and parcel of general merchandise."

Genta's emergence as a watch brand had coincided precisely with the beginning of the boom of luxury watches in the Far East, a boom that would transform the entire industry. "He was the first celebrity watch designer," says Tay, and as such he cleared a path that was later followed by Franck Muller and then Richard Mille. "He was a real dandy, a great creative genius, the maestro – and he really did behave like a maestro." Once he received a call from a Sultan in the Far East, picked up the phone and said, "Sorry, I can't talk now as I'm contemplating a blue Picasso. Call this evening, Your Majesty."

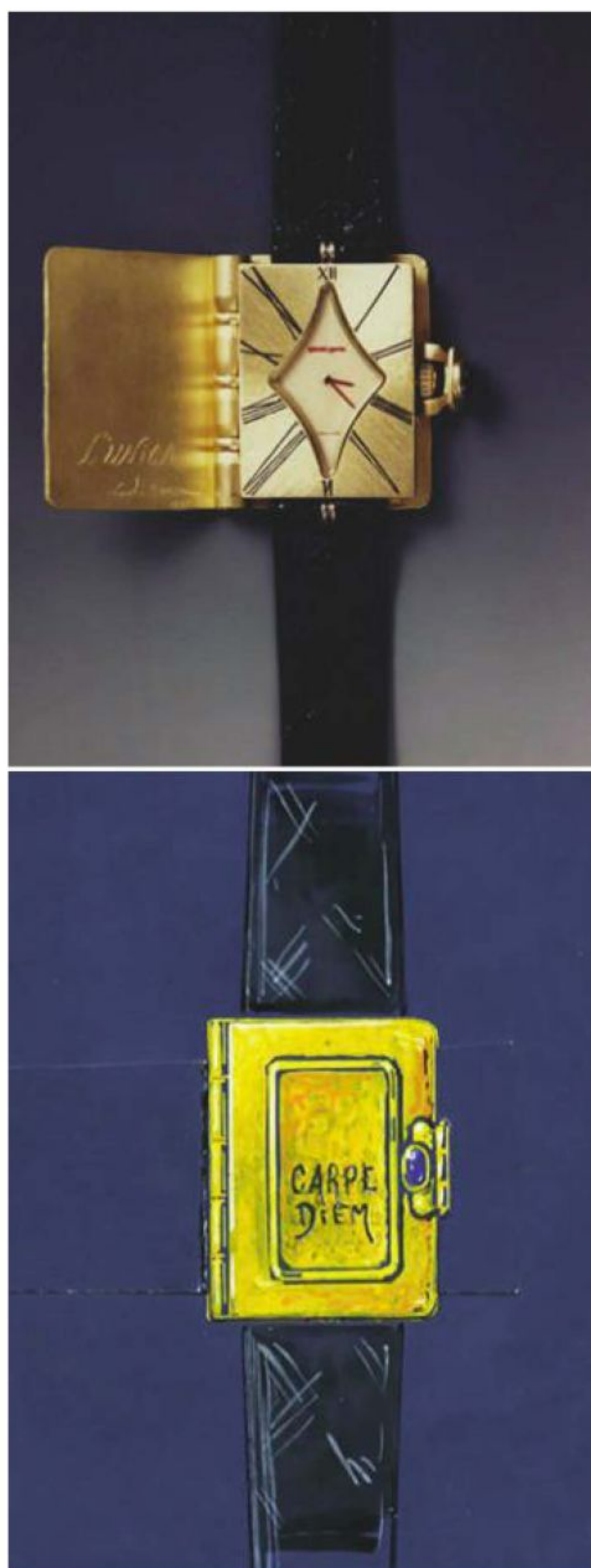
Having sold his designs, he now moved in the highest circles: he used to go shopping for cashmere in Italy with the dapper Pierre Arpels, he created the famous Bulgari Bulgari watch with Gianni Bulgari and discussed design with the king of the jet set, Gianni Agnelli, who also wore his watches. By the beginning of the Eighties, Genta had become famous.

"He had a Ferrari and he was always dressed very elegantly, in classical Italian style," remembers Jean-Claude Biver, then in his early thirties and relaunching Blancpain. "I remember him driving a Ferrari in 1980 and there were not many people in the watch industry who dared to drive a Ferrari."

"To be honest, a lot of people, the regular Swiss watch industry, were very wary of him," says Genta's widow, Evelyne, who met him at a dinner party in Monte Carlo at this time; he spent the whole evening telling her that her watch was ugly. They married shortly afterwards and during the Eighties and Nineties she took care of their expanding business. "When we married there were around 30 or 40 people working for Gérald. Later we got up to about 250 people."

And as the business grew, so did resentment in the more conservative corners of the industry. "They thought he was too creative, too different," she says, remembering one event in particular.

"There were these events that were called Montres Et Bijoux. One of them was at [Geneva's] Hotel Du Rhone and that was the first year he'd done his Mickey Mouse watch. So he arrived, put on white cotton gloves and started displaying these Miceys and Minnies. Then the CEO of a big Swiss >>



The one-of-a-kind 'Carpe Diem', designed by Genta. The Italian collector who commissioned it asked for a watch that gave him a new path in life

>> watch company said, 'Mr Genta, you cannot show these. They are not dignified for the Swiss watch industry. Why don't you show your beautiful perpetual calendar?' Gérald got very upset and there was Swiss TV filming and Gérald started to say, 'How dare you criticise Walt Disney. He gave more happiness to the world than all of you together.' By then the Swiss TV cameras had heard all this commotion and started filming it. He then said, 'OK, if you don't want my Mickeys, I'm leaving.' So out come the watches and he walks out. Pierre-Alain Blum [then owner of Ebel who was assembling watches for Genta at this time] comes over and says 'What's going on, Gérald?' And Gérald says, 'These idiots, they don't understand that this is art and these are beautiful. I'm leaving.' And Pierre-Alain says, 'If you are pulling out, we're pulling out as well.' So we all pulled out together and that was a big thing in *La Tribune De Genève* the next day. That was Gérald. As for his relationship with the other brands... let's say, he was an individual, so he always felt that they didn't match."

As ambassador of Monaco to the Court Of St James's, Evelyne Genta is used to phrasing things diplomatically. Blum is rather more forthright. "I remember that I was the only one in the industry to back him up in his attitude. Most of the people at Montres Et Bijoux thought their own shit didn't stink. When the Basel Fair did not want to give him a booth, I gave him the opportunity to have representation at Basel, as I had a booth with four offices and gave one to him."

But assembling Genta's watches was a relatively small part of Blum's business, as at that time he was making watches for Cartier. "I was fully vertical, making 100 per cent for Cartier. The only thing I was not making was the leather straps," Blum says. It was Blum who introduced Genta to Cartier's legendary CEO Alain Dominique Perrin.

"I had met Genta in 1974, but I met him for business in 1983 or 1984, after I had launched the Pasha," says Perrin. "He came to me and he offered to think about Pasha complications." He also imagined complications that had never existed. For instance, Perrin cites the Golf Pasha, which bristled with push pieces enabling golfers to keep track of the score. "With Gérald we made about eight or nine complications including a minute repeater."

Perrin appreciated Genta's independent spirit and his loyalty. "When I had the idea to launch SIHH against Basel, I proposed to Gérald that he follow me and he said yes right away. He was the first one. I never forget that Gérald followed me to SIHH, because I needed people to support the launch and make it a



From top: Gérald and Evelyne Genta in Singapore, 1993; a 1997 limited-edition Mickey Mouse design

'I had to wait very patiently before the public learned it was me who made the Royal Oak'

success and Gérald stayed with the fair for quite some time."

Gérald Genta the brand continued to grow, but never chimed with mainstream European taste. "He was much more famous abroad than in Switzerland," says Evelyne. However, his success exploded in the Far East. "We had two businesses with the Tays: the normal line that would be sold in all of The Hour Glass shops in Singapore, Indonesia, Bangkok; and then, a bit like in the Middle East, there would be all the sultans in Malaysia, very big guys in Indonesia and Brunei."

Genta liked dealing with potentates, for whom he designed unique pieces. Typical of the commissions he might undertake was a sword stick topped with a large piece of quartz crystal engraved with a prayer, behind which was concealed a watch, a gem-set table clock flanked by lions in 24-carat gold and

plenty of erotica. "They were usually minute repeaters and he insisted they were not vulgar because you couldn't see the face. He always felt he didn't want to see any faces," says Evelyne, explaining that, for Gérald, these represented progress from "the old erotic watches with nuns and maids where you always see people's faces".

He enjoyed adding whimsical touches, such as the set of erotic watches that came in a box that played the score of *Emmanuelle* when it was opened.

As Genta neared his seventies, it made sense for him to sell his brand to the Tays, who subsequently sold to Bulgari. By the beginning of the 21st century, mechanical watchmaking was resurgent and, as a manufacturer of complications including grandes sonneries and minute repeaters, the Genta brand possessed vital expertise for the coming boom in *haute horlogerie* and the new owners were understandably keen to exploit these assets for their brand. However, Bulgari let it fade from the industry. "Gérald would have liked Bulgari to develop the brand," says Evelyne. "The fact that they didn't, and that they just took what was useful to them, broke his heart."

In the last decade of his life he tried to relaunch under the name Gerald Charles, but his happiest moments professionally were when he was collaborating with the friends he had made in the industry: for instance, working with the Sterns to refresh the Nautilus for its 40th birthday and advising Jean-Claude Biver to embark on research to make a red ceramic, a material integral to the success of the Hublot-Ferrari partnership. He was still painting and designing at the time of his death in 2011. Interest in his career has grown to such extent that Evelyne has established the Gérald Genta Heritage Association "to pay tribute to one of the greatest watch designers in history", "encourage and reward promising young talent" and assembled a board of "industry experts and pre-eminent horologists", including the author of this article.

Genta would no doubt be extremely gratified by the interest in his work from a generation whose parents were children when he designed the Royal Oak. But those who knew and admired this maverick genius remember the artist, who, having contributed so much to the watch industry and the history of timepieces, once admitted, "I am an artist, a painter. I hate having to adhere to the constraints of time. It irritates me." **GQ**

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Industry Report

Disruption as standard

The rise of microbrands

Story by **Charlie Burton**

If you like watches and you're on Instagram, chances are your feed is full of ads for timepieces by brands you've never heard of. These are, in the industry parlance, "microbrands" and their number have proliferated of late. They might look like vintage watches, they might offer interesting complications, they might be trying to sell you on a completely new way to tell the time, but the core microbrand proposition has become fairly standardised. Typically, it's a watch designed and manufactured by an individual or small team that's sold directly to the consumer over the brand's own website. It will often present itself as a more cost-effective alternative to major watch brands such as Rolex or Omega. Patrick Hohmann, CEO of German microbrand Werenbach, says that's no accident. "The watch market is saturated and the distribution channels in the upper-price segment are closed. It is almost impossible for young brands to establish themselves alongside well-known brands. In the lower price segment, the market is still dynamic."

The run of new brands entering that market has been enabled by one thing. As Don Cochrane, chairman of Vertex, puts it, "Internet, internet, internet. From access to information to access to suppliers to access to your target audience, none of this was possible before." Other digital tools such as 3-D printing have vastly reduced the time and cost of prototyping, plus start-ups have emerged to provide even the smallest watch business with an effective e-commerce infrastructure. And, obviously, do not underestimate Instagram. If a user has been lusting after a new dive watch, then a sponsored post for an affordable microbrand alternative may be well received. Don't underestimate, either, Instagram's ability to display a lifesize photograph of a watch. The consumer gets a proxy of an in-store experience – they can hold the screen over their wrist and imagine what it would look like to wear.

However, the main factor that has driven the explosion of microbrands over the last few years is crowd finance platforms such as Kickstarter. The Swiss-based consultancy Mercury Project released a report in July showing that in the first half of this year, 183 watch projects launched on Kickstarter

and 48 per cent of them succeeded. Given that not all microbrands use Kickstarter, clearly, the market is considerable.

So, how best to get a handle on what exactly you're buying? Cochrane says there's a correlation between price and sophistication. If you're a microbrand, he says, "There are some amazing companies in Asia that have a vast catalogue of watches they will make for you and stick your name on, maybe even change a colour or two. All this can be done very cheaply and with very low minimum-order numbers. A lot of the sub-£500 watches fall into this bracket."

"Above £500 you get some really interesting companies making very low-volume, own-tooled cases with a good Asian or lower-end Swiss movement," Cochrane adds. As you get more expensive, you access better materials and Swiss movements. "If you think the options list on a Porsche is excessive, try Swiss ETA or Sellita movements."

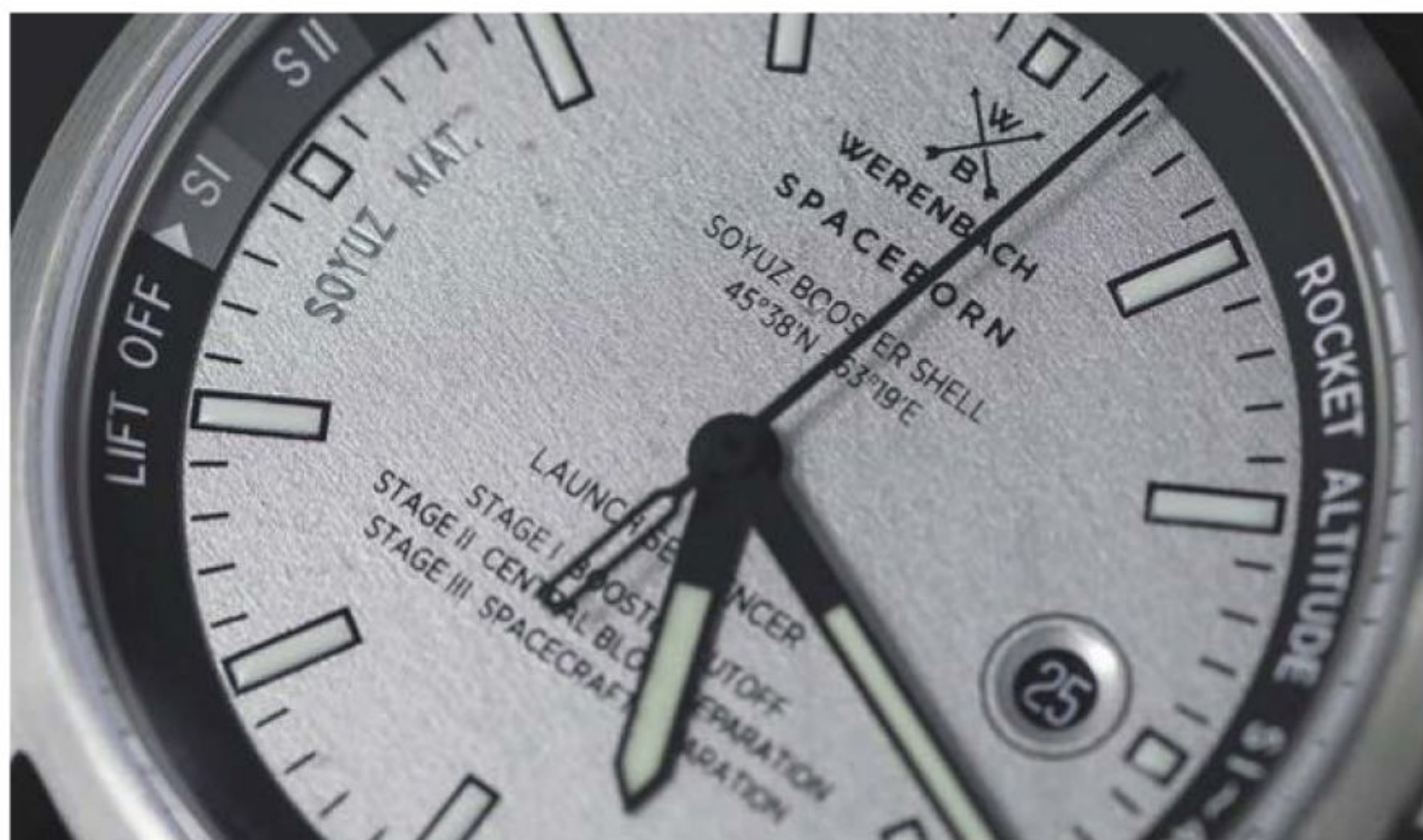
Across all those brackets, interesting pieces have emerged. Some are resuscitations of heritage dial names: Vertex, for instance,

relaunched a brand that shuttered in 1972. Others offer sought-after complications at low prices: Baltic sells a neo-vintage chronograph for £575; ERA is planning to sell a tourbillon timepiece for £730. A handful of companies have carved a niche through special materials: Werenbach sells watches cut from the shells of Soyuz rockets; Chronotechna's dials have a "super-black" coating that they believe to be "the darkest man-made substance". Then there are the many quartz offerings, which emphasise non-traditional design: check out the primary colours on Newgate's watches or Klokers' completely reimaged dials.

The established watch world has taken notice. More manufacturers are selling direct to the consumer and promoting products on Instagram. But that doesn't mean that all microbrands are doing good work. "The successful ones focus not just on marketing but heavily focus on the product," says Esti Chazanow, cofounder of LIV, the most funded Kickstarter watch in history.

Too many microbrand watches are unimaginative rip-offs of classics, such as the Rolex Submariner, or, worse, just "another watch". Surely, the spirit of a microbrand should be all about invention and ideas. The ones that exhibit these qualities will survive. And in the meantime, can someone get a move on and invent an affordable repeater? **GQ**

In the first half of this year, 183 watch projects launched on Kickstarter



Werenbach's watches are made from rockets that have been recovered in Kazakhstan having been to space and back. The material is then treated and carved up for watchmaking

Independent microbrands have proliferated across the watch world in recent years. **So which is right for you?**



First Person

Reader, I bought him a...

Marking a momentous occasion with a watch is a (long) labour of love

Story by **Emily Wright**

When my husband said he would like a watch for his 40th birthday, almost a year in advance, I naively ticked the gift purchase task off on my mental to-do list. A clear steer was worth its weight in gold and now I knew what he wanted, picking the watch itself would surely be the easy part. What a fool I was. A complete timepiece novice – a title I still haven't shaken despite spending the best part of a year researching, deliberating and bending the expert ears of an inordinate number of universally patient watch specialists – I had no idea what I was getting myself into.

From price point to strap style and from dial colour to mechanism, I yo-yoed between brands and fell into lengthy research vortexes in a quest to make the right choice. A significant watch purchase requires an emotional investment as well as a financial one and this only adds to the pressure – particularly if the person making the decision is not the one who will ultimately be wearing it. I wanted to give my husband something he would (happily) wear forever, so I knew it had to represent him and his style – not just now, but for years to come. The weight of responsibility I felt to get that right was not something I'd expected. Quite apart from the permanence of a purchase such as this I hadn't fully appreciated that, like a piece of jewellery, a beautiful watch can be right for one person and look entirely out of place on the wrist of another. Not unlike an engagement ring – and I have new-found respect for anyone who has ever deliberated over the selection of one of these for someone else – a watch is simultaneously one of the most personal and public things many people will own: personal because of what it means to you, public because of what it says about you.

The selection was a suitably daunting process and the first step was to thin out the herd by taking out swaths of nonstarters in

one fell swoop. Budget seemed a good place to start, but even this process of elimination doesn't come without challenges. A common problem when looking for something more special than a standard model and not as bank-breaking as a luxury masterpiece is that you are left with a relatively narrow slice of the market – a tricky budgetary no-man's-land that is comparably underserved. This is particularly true if you are after a



I soon fell into the trap of sneaking a peek at the next price bracket up...

classic, elegant watch, as I was, rather than a sporty piece. That's not to say there aren't some decent options out there for around the £850 mark; Junghans, Baume & Mercier, Longines, Oris and Nomos Glashütte all cater at this price point, with the latter building a growing reputation towards the higher end of this market. I compared options for hours, days, maybe weeks and soon fell into the inevitable trap of taking a sneak peek at what was available in the next price bracket up and it became immediately clear that this was the sweet spot. An extra £200-£400 is not an insignificant additional investment

and the decision to increase your budget will always be a personal one. For me, the difference in look and quality of automatic watches above the £1,000 mark warranted the extra upfront cost.

I had a good idea about style thanks to some pointers from my husband – leather strap not metal bracelet; light dial rather than dark; round not square; simple not fussy; clean not embellished – but it was down to me to pick the brand. All of the watchmakers I had originally looked at had fine options within the new price bracket and so the decision was ultimately led by the watches themselves. It became a two-horse race between the Longines Flagship and Baume & Mercier's Classima range and at this point I took my search offline. Such a personal purchase deserves some face time, so I visited both brands to look at the watches close-up and on a

wrist. There was nothing more than instinct in it, but mine told me to go with the Longines. Once you get to this stage of the decision-making game, there are few better indicators than intuition. I took a week to mull over the choice before finally biting the bullet and I am glad I did. There is nothing like the buffer of a cooldown period to reassure you that the watch being boxed up in front of you is the right one.

I once heard it can take people weeks, months or even years to choose the perfect watch and now can I see why. But it does seem to me that after all of the research, comparison, deliberation and decision-making, eventually, at the final hurdle, it comes down to what feels right. Once I had finally made my decision I discovered that my mother-in-law had chosen a Longines watch for my husband's father's 40th birthday, more than 30 years earlier. And if that doesn't say timeless, then I don't know what does. **GQ**

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The watchmaking *trailblazers*

Story by Tracey Llewellyn

When it comes to 21st-century wristwear, all too often it is – to borrow from Dame Shirley Bassey – a little bit of history repeating. But while recent interest in pre-owned and vintage timepieces might have led brands to revisit and rehash archival models, plenty are still set on pushing the limits of horological design and function.

New technology

With the electronic TAG Heuer Connected, Montblanc Summit and Louis Vuitton Horizon all making waves, watch manufacturers are increasingly taking up the challenge thrown down by smartwatches. And while many are tackling applied science head on, offering a dazzling array of wrist-worn apps, other ultra-high-end watchmakers are taking a more collaborative approach and experimenting with combinations of traditional and modern.

Unsurprisingly, one of the earliest and most successful uses of hybrid technology in watchmaking comes from Japanese powerhouse Seiko, which has used its patented Spring Drive movement in its high-end timepieces – including Grand Seiko and Credor – since 1999. Accurate to one second per day, Spring Drive has a conventional gear train but uses quartz instead of an escapement and balance wheel to regulate it.

A slightly newer kid on the technology block is industrial designer Benoît Mintiens who, eight years on from developing his first, avant-garde timepiece in 2010, introduced the Ressence Type 2 e-Crown Concept, a perfect fusion of mechanical and smartwatch. Developed in partnership with former Apple executive Tony Fadell, the timekeeping relies on a standard automatic movement and the additional e-Crown module, powered by a combination of kinetic and solar energy, allows the watch to connect, via Bluetooth, to an app, through which time is set automatically no matter which time zone the wearer is in.

While the e-Crown concept is still in its early days, FP Journe's revolutionary electromechanical movement has been in serial production since 2014 in the tonneau-shaped *Élégante* collection. While the watch was originally a women's timepiece, its simplicity has led to a larger version for men being developed. In a clever act of energy efficiency, if the timepiece remains motionless for 35 minutes, the movement switches to standby mode to save battery power.

New components

While it is certainly a brave move, for some purists the crossover from mechanical to electronic is a step too far. However, even the most traditional of brands have recently been experimenting with new materials and fresh takes on movement components to improve accuracy and efficiency. At the start of the millennium, a consortium of watchmakers (Rolex, Patek Philippe and Swatch Group) became involved in research into monocrystalline silicon – a material harder and lighter than steel and that is non-magnetic, resistant to corrosion and shock and generally needs no lubrication.



Grand Seiko SBGA407 Skyflake, £5,250.
grand-seiko.com



FP Journe Élégante £9,300.
fpjourne.com



Ressence Type 2 e-Crown Concept, £38,920.
ressencewatches.com

In the end, though, it was an independent, Ulysse Nardin, that was first to bring silicon to market in the 2001 Freak. Unlike any watch before, the Freak had neither traditional dial nor hands and featured a carousel construction and baguette movement that rotated on its own axis. With the aim of eliminating friction and perfecting accuracy, UN has continued to innovate with subsequent models. This year's Freak Next, for example, features a revolutionary flying oscillator (the component or combination thereof that divides time into equal units – a pendulum, balance spring or quartz, for example) with flexible silicon blades – a mechanical innovation that is the culmination of a ten-year project with silicon micro-engineering specialist Sigatec.

Also looking to master the oscillator is Zenith, >>

Brands are taking the
best of the past and
fusing it with modern
technology



Ulysse Nardin
Freak Next.
ulysses-nardin.com

Audemars Piguet
Royal Oak Concept
Flying Tourbillon GMT,
2018, £186,800.
audemarspiguet.com



AP has introduced a series of revolutionary
watchmaking firsts

Zenith Defy Inventor, £15,500.
zenith-watches.com



>> which two years ago introduced the Defy Lab and Calibre ZO 342 movement, replacing the 30 or so parts of a standard regulator with a monolithic flexible oscillator with integrated anchor and silicon escape wheel. The 44mm case of the watch is made of Aeronith, a new aluminium foam-polymer developed by LVMH stablemate Hublot. This year saw the start of a trickle-down of Zenith's new technology. While the Defy Lab was made in a series of just ten pieces, the introduction of the Defy Inventor indicates the beginnings of serial production for the revolutionary oscillator.

In 2018, the man behind the development of the Defy Lab, Guy Sémon, was appointed director of the Research Institute for the watch division of the LVMH Group, enabling him to pool the R&D departments of Zenith, TAG Heuer and Hublot. And LVMH is not alone in establishing a state-of-the-art in-house "skunk-works" for projects of radical innovation.

In 2005, one of the most traditional of all houses, Patek Philippe, introduced the first innovation from its Advanced Research department with the silicon Silinvar escape wheel in the Caliber 315 movement of the Reference 5250 annual calendar. Further innovations using silicon followed in 2006, 2008 and 2011, and in 2017 Advanced Research introduced an innovation in compliant technology, consolidating and reducing the number of individual components (as Ulysse Nardin and Zenith have also done). All the new technologies continue to be used in current models.

While Audemars Piguet is sometimes accused of being a "single model" brand, one need only look at its Concept watches to see just how groundbreaking the watchmaker really is. Embracing futuristic aesthetics and materials to enhance style and function, AP has introduced revolutionary watchmaking firsts in pieces such as the Royal Oak Concept, 2002; Royal Oak Concept Carbon, 2008; Royal Oak Concept GMT Tourbillon, 2011; Royal Oak Concept GMT Tourbillon, 2014; Royal Oak Concept Laptimer Michael Schumacher, 2015; Royal Oak Concept Supersonnerie, 2016; Royal Oak Concept Tourbillon Chronograph, 2017 and Royal Oak Concept Flying Tourbillon GMT, 2018. >>

‘Every product should be exciting’

Ulysse Nardin CEO Patrick Pruniaux on how to prevail as the industry ticks on faster than ever

Story by **Rachel Felder**

He's been at the helm of Ulysse Nardin for more than two years and arrived with a CV that includes helping launch the Apple Watch and a decade at TAG Heuer, but Patrick Pruniaux admits he's anything but a complacent executive. "That's one thing I learned at Apple," he says, "that you can be a leader and still challenge yourself all the time, and have doubts."

Last year, his role was expanded to include running a second heritage watch company, Girard-Perregaux – which, like UN, is owned by Kering – and the impact he's making at both is clear. At UN, for example, he's expanded the bold Freak collection and introduced a concise assortment of the finely enamelled, dressier pieces that are its mainstay. "It's about making sure we have the right number of SKUs, where every product should be extremely exciting," he says, using the trade term for individual models. A redesigned website, offering e-commerce for the first time, is also imminent.

For G-P, he's been focusing on the collections he calls its "pillars": sleek Laureato; Bridges, which spotlights internal mechanics; and, for women, the classic Cat's Eye. Each, he suggests, offers a modern take on the company's pedigree. "There is a mix of gravitas, meaning I know I'm wearing the watch of a company that's been around forever, but on the other hand there is a kind of carpe diem, like a tension between the two," he says.

Nonetheless, neither brand has the instant recognisability of, say, a Cartier or Rolex. "UN and G-P are brands that don't come with built-in momentum," says Ariel Adams, editor of ablogtowatch.com. "You don't inherit the brand and say, 'The brand is going in this direction and I just have to keep it going.' These are brands that have a little bit of an existential crisis."

On the other hand, each has a deep heritage that Pruniaux is accentuating. He hired a historian to tap into UN's longstanding maritime links, which helped inspire watches such as the Military Semper Fortis. He's worked with Stefano Macaluso – whose father, Luigi, reinvigorated G-P in the Nineties and noughties by focusing on its precisely crafted movements – to understand its DNA.

He's also, behind the scenes, created a work environment much less stiff, and arguably more creative, than one might expect for brands that have been around for more than 150 years. "I strive to create an environment where it's all about the brand, blending rational and emotional, but the rational part is probably higher with me," Pruniaux says. "In a world that is transforming so fast, like the watch industry currently, I think that's the only way you prevail, through agility and being very demanding with yourself first, and having fun doing that, and challenging ourselves permanently."



Above, from top:
Girard-Perregaux Cosmos, £255,000. girard-perregaux.com
Ulysse Nardin Marine Torpilleur Military US Navy, £6,800. ulysse-nardin.com



Ulysse Nardin CEO Patrick Pruniaux



baume-et-mercier.com

Baumatic In-house self-winding Steel 40mm



BAUME & MERCIER
MAISON D'HORLOGERIE GENEVE 1830

Richard Mille RM 50-03
McLaren F1, £982,500.
richardmille.com



The world's lightest mechanical chronograph was the result of a collaboration with Richard Mille and McLaren Applied Technologies

New materials

Launched earlier this year was one of AP's latest developments, created in partnership with the Swatch Group: a new paramagnetic hairspring made from Nivachron, a titanium alloy that combines the anti-magnetic properties of silicon with the production process of traditional nickel-steel springs. The decision to launch the hairspring in a Swatch watch (albeit a limited-edition priced at an unprecedented £1,200) underlined the fact that the new component can be mass produced at a very affordable price.

Beyond the R&D departments, some brands exist solely to break new ground. Richard Mille is the front-runner in collaborating with external industries to bring new materials and complications into traditional watch-making. Inspired by the automotive, aeronautical and sailing worlds, the brand has consistently looked to the future to improve the timepieces of today, from the original RM 001 of 2001 through to 2017's RM 50-03. The world's lightest mechanical chronograph watch, the RM 50-03 was the result of a collaboration between Richard Mille, the University Of Manchester and McLaren Applied Technologies. Made from



Rado True Thinline Les Couleurs Le Corbusier, £1,750. rado.com

graphene, it weighs just 40g, including strap. Worn by pro sportsmen and women including Rafa Nadal, Yohan Blake and Bubba Watson, Mille's performance machines are distinctive and rare but come at a cost: the RM 50-03 McLaren F1 cost £982,500 (and sold out almost immediately).

Many other brands have joined Richard Mille in the quest for material developments, having proprietary metals and substances that offer advantages over the traditional in terms of weight, strength or robustness. Few, however – with the exception of Chanel in recent years – have focused on ceramic to the degree of Rado. The king of functionality, Rado is a brand with its finger on the pulse of modern design, but behind the scenes it has also been a leader in the application of high-tech ceramic (as well as hardened titanium and anodised aluminium). Just a few of Rado's innovations include the original scratch-resistant DiaStar of 1962; 2002's V10K with its synthetic layer of nano-crystalline diamond; the 2012 HyperChrome with ceramic-injected monobloc case; and the incredible coloured models of the True Thinline Les Couleurs Le Corbusier, launched this year in partnership with Les Couleurs Suisse, the company that controls the use of colours from Le Corbusier's Architectural Polychromy. >>

The new old

When it comes to watchmakers bringing something new in terms of shape, the territory belongs almost exclusively to the independents, from the kinetic sculptures of MB&F to the space-age designs of Urwerk and the memento mori of Fiona Krüger. But there is also a whole host of brands that are taking the best of the past and combining it with the advantages afforded by modern technology.

After launching its new carbon-composite hairspring in January 2019 in the Carrera Calibre Heuer 02T Tourbillon Nanograph, TAG Heuer has applied the technology to its more accessibly priced Autavia collection. Originally produced between 1962 and 1985, the Autavia was inspired by period Heuer dashboard instruments and worn by racing drivers including Jo Siffert, Jochen Rindt, Clay Regazzoni and Mario Andretti. A perennial favourite, the watch family has now been souped up with nano-technology for the 21st century.

Appreciating the significance of a signature design, as well as the necessity to constantly reinvent and improve on the original is a skill that has been mastered by relatively few. Cartier is arguably the king of the revamp – always

understanding when the time is right to tweak and reissue one of its classics, the latest being the Santos, which saw new versions in both 2018 and 2019. The new models come in a dizzying array of shapes and sizes, all

crowd-pleasers with subtle changes that make a big difference. The cases and bracelets are thinner; the familiar screwed bezel has been streamlined; and quick-release straps, plus a simple link removal system, meet the demands of a new generation of watch buyers.

For Piaget, the house signatures of hard-stone dials, intricate goldwork and ultra-thin movements still reign. But while the watches remain instantly recognisable, the technology behind them is nudging into state-of-the-art. The slim calibres first seen in the Fifties have remained brand staples across the decades, while the latest development in micro-mechanics was showcased in 2018. The Altiplano Ultimate Concept is an amazing 2mm thick in its cased entirety. The caseback, which acts as the baseplate, is made from a new cobalt-based alloy that stops the mechanism bending. Other components, crafted using the most up-to-date methods, had to be reworked and reduced in size to create this splendid piece that has yet to go into serial production.

Under the guidance of Jean-Christophe Babin, and thanks to the design genius of Fabrizio Buonamassa Stigliani and his team, Bulgari has also developed the ultra-thin movement to record-breaking levels. Encased in a revamped Octo case (a design originally developed by Gérald Genta and that passed into Bulgari's hands



**Cartier
Santos-Dumont,
£3,350.**
cartier.co.uk

**TAG Heuer Autavia
Calibre Heuer 02, £4,850.**
tagheuer.com



Piaget Altiplano Ultimate Concept. piaget.com

when it acquired the Genta brand in 2000), the Octo Finissimo has rapidly become the main men's collection for the Italian/Swiss brand, rivalling the equally reimagined women's Serpenti family of watches.

Finally, there are those appropriating designs from the past and breathing new life into them. Leading the way is Gucci, which has to be congratulated for its comprehensive selection of men's and women's timepieces brought together under the leadership of Alessandro Michele. The Grip collection, with its early-20th-century influences, combined with decidedly Seventies vibes, has become one of the highlights of 2019, showing that while we all need to look to the future, it's always good to do so with an eye on the past, taking the best with us, while leaving the superfluous behind. **GQ**

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In 1953, stubborn pluck, a fair bit of planning, and British engineering helped get men to the top of Everest for the first time. Tents tested in the wind tunnel at Farnborough, jackets made in Manchester, wristwatches from Bishop's Cleeve.

Kit from Old Blighty is still standard equipment for the roof of the world. Consider the Bremont Supermarine S300, which Nirmal "Nims" Purja is wearing as he attempts to summit Everest, and 13 other Himalayan 8,000-metre peaks, in just 7 months (the current record is nearly 8 years).

Built in Henley-on-Thames, its hardened steel case and chronometer-rated movement were engineered to survive in the harshest places on earth. Because while tents and jackets may now be manufactured in any corner of the globe, there's still no substitute for a proper British timepiece.



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BREMONT
CHRONOMETERS

From top: Mondaine
Official Swiss Railways
essence, £169. At John
Lewis. johnlewis.com

Baume Automatic Custom
Timepiece, £670.
baumewatches.com

Material change

While partnering with Waste Free Oceans, new brand Baume is heavily focused on sustainability, with 100 per cent recycled polyethylene (PET) bracelets, an approach also undertaken by Mondaine in 2017, when it launched its "essence" collection, featuring bio plastic cases, natural rubber straps and packaging made using recycled PET bottles.



The Collection

Products of environment

Get hands-on and help conserve land, sea and air
with these watches inspired by sustainability

Photographs by Andy Barter

Environmental standard

Created in 2005 by Yann Arthus-Bertrand, the GoodPlanet Foundation aims to encourage people to take concrete action to protect the earth and its inhabitants. Since partnering with Omega it has collaborated on two documentaries: *Terra* and *Time For The Planet*. In addition to marking the centenary of Watches Of Switzerland by donating proceeds from the sale of 100 watches to The Prince's Trust, in 2019 Rolex launched its Perpetual Planet initiative, designed to recognise individuals with projects that advance knowledge and protect human wellbeing and the environment.



From top: Rolex Datejust 41, £9,800. At the Watches Of Switzerland Group. goldsmiths.co.uk

Seamaster Aqua Terra GoodPlanet Omega Master Co-Axial, £5,600. omegawatches.com

Breguet Marine 5517,
£23,700. breguet.com



Clean sweep

To mark the release of its new Marine collection, Breguet has teamed up with the Race For Water Foundation and in particular its Odyssey 2017-21 programme dedicated to fighting waste pollution in our oceans.



Deep dive

Both Oris and Breitling have appreciable histories in supplying fit-for-purpose dive watches. The former has committed to clearing the seas of plastics in partnership with Pacific Garbage Screening, while the latter is supporting beach cleanups in partnership with Ocean Conservancy in Bali and its “Surfers Squad” of ambassador athletes Kelly Slater, Sally Fitzgibbons and Stephanie Gilmore.

From left: Breitling Superocean Heritage Chronograph 44 Ocean Conservancy Limited Edition, £4,880. breitling.com

Oris Clean Ocean Limited Edition, £1,800. oris.ch

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Clockwise from top left: Ball
Watch Co Roadmaster Skipper,
£1,940. shop.ballwatch.ch

Panerai Submersible Mike Horn
Edition, £34,800. panerai.com

Blancpain Fifty Fathoms
Automatic Titanium, £12,660.
blancpain.com



Sea change

Panerai's Submersible Mike Horn Edition supports the brand's longtime ambassador, the explorer-turned-conservationist, and furthers its cause to lighten the wearer's footprint on the planet by using recycled titanium in the case and a strap made from recycled PET bottles. Meanwhile, Ball Watch Co is supporting Maewan, a specially engineered sailboat that serves as the water-borne base for extreme sports enthusiasts committed to supporting local communities worldwide. Conservation is also at the heart of Blancpain's Ocean Commitment programme, represented here by its Fifty Fathoms dive watch.

ANONIMO



NAUTILO
Vintage Chocolat
AM-5019.17.105.102
Ø 42 mm

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anonimo.com

From top: Carl F Bucherer
Patravi ScubaTec
Black Manta Special
Edition, £5,500.
carl-f-bucherer.com

Certina DS Action Diver
Powermatic 80, £725.
certina.com

Endangered species

Part of the proceeds from sales of Carl F Bucherer's Patravi ScubaTec Black Manta Special Edition will support the Manta Trust, a UK-based charity with the mission of conserving the habitat of the rare black manta ray. Meanwhile, Certina supports the Sea Turtle Conservancy, which is aiming to do the same for these ocean reptiles.

Focus on fauna

Chopard has long used ethical gold in its creations, but starting with the launch of its new Alpine Eagle model, it's doubling down on ecological awareness by advocating for the protection of the eponymous bird of prey. Meanwhile, Hublot – renowned for its limited-edition series supporting artistic and sporting greats – has turned its attention to the plight of the rhinoceros, partnering with brand ambassador Kevin Pietersen, founder of Sorai (Save Our Rhinos Africa And India).



From top: Hublot Big Bang
Unico SORAI, £19,900.
hublot.com

Chopard Alpine Eagle,
£17,200. chopard.com

Nomos Glashütte
Metro Date Power
Reserve, £2,980.
nomos-glashuette.com



Green giant

Nomos has sought to reduce its carbon footprint by centring as much of its production as possible at its tailor-made Glashütte facility in Germany. In 2013 it was recognised as an Okoprofit company, honouring its environmental responsibility, and two years later its Metro model won the Green Product Award in the award's Lifestyle category, as voted for by a jury representing 400 companies from 21 countries. **GQ**



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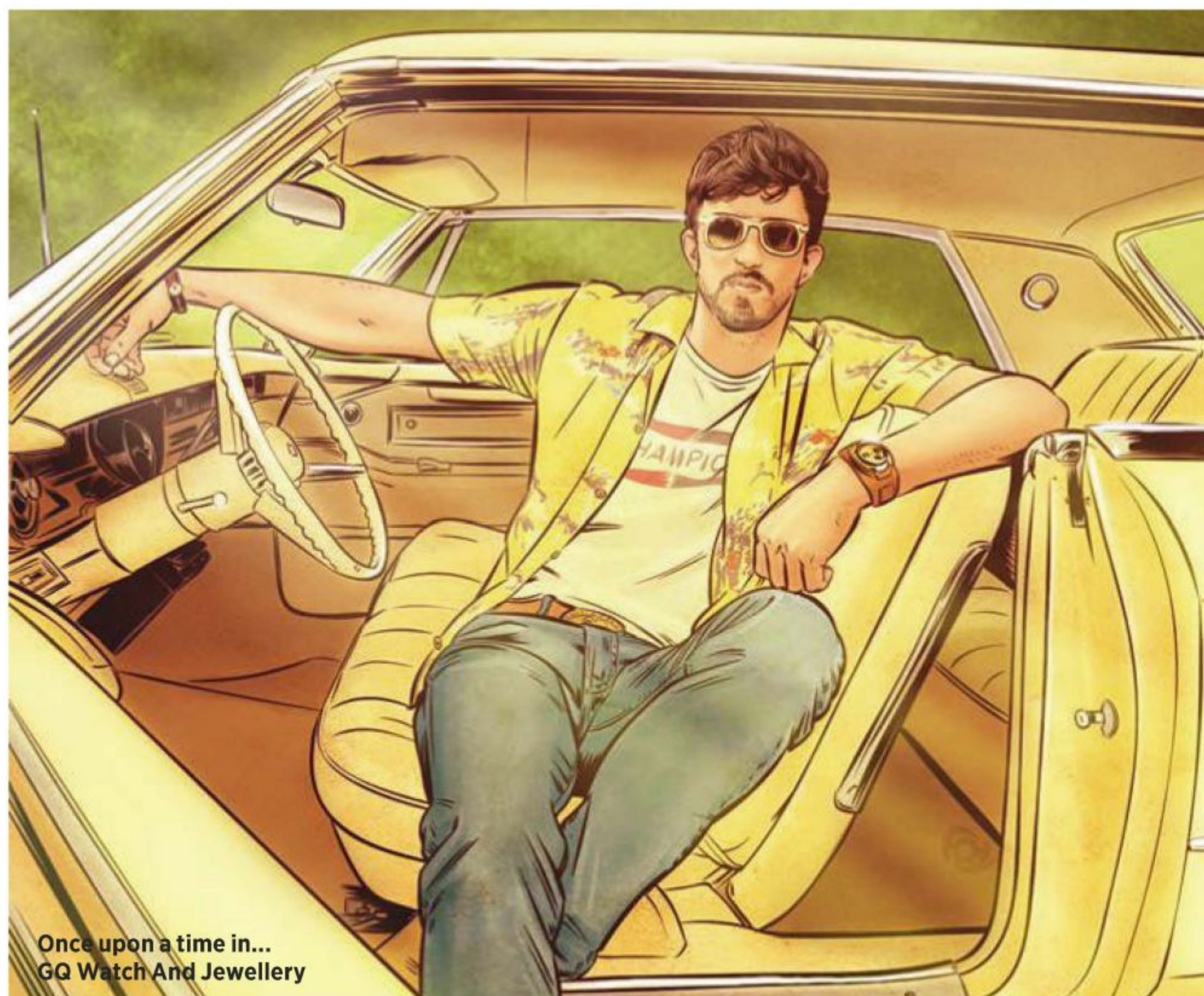
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2019	PPA Writer Of The Year	2011	Foreign Press Association Media Awards, Sports
2019	PPA New Talent Award Editor, GQ.co.uk	2011	Amnesty International Media Award
2019	PPA New Talent Award Engagement Manager, GQ.co.uk	2010	Amnesty International Media Award
2018	Comment Awards Popular Columnist Of The Year	2010	One World Media Press Award
2017	BSME Editor Of The Year	2010	The Maggies Magazine Cover Of The Year
2017	Lovie Best Website For Lifestyle	2010	P&G Awards Best Styling (GQ Style)
2017	Digiday Publishing Awards Europe Best Use Of Facebook Live	2009	PPA Writer Of The Year
2017	Digiday Publishing Awards Europe Best Branded Content Program	2008	BSME Editor Of The Year
2017	PPA Writer Of The Year	2007	BSME Magazine Of The Year
2017	AOP Audience Development Team Of The Year	2007	BSME Brand Building Initiative Of The Year
2017	CNI Best Brand Financial Performance In Native Advertising	2007	MDA/MJA Press Gazette Awards Best Cover
2017	CNI Best Native Campaign Of The Year	2007	P&G Awards Best Styling (GQ Style)
2016	BSME Editor Of The Year	2006	P&G Awards Best Grooming Editor (GQ Style)
2016	Digiday Awards Europe Video Team Of The Year	2006	P&G Awards Best Styling (GQ Style)
2016	Shots Awards Brand Entertainment Of The Year - Series	2006	MDA/MJA Press Gazette Awards Interviewer Of The Year
2016	Ciclope Festival Finalist, Best Direction	2006	MDA/MJA Press Gazette Awards Best Designed Consumer Magazine
2016	Lovie Long Form Or Series Video First Place	2006	MDA/MJA Press Gazette Awards Subbing Team Of The Year
2016	Lovie Long Form Or Series Video People's Choice	2006	PPA Writer Of The Year
2015	DMA Men's Lifestyle Magazine Of The Year	2005	PPA Writer Of The Year
2015	FMJA Stylist Of The Year (GQ Style)	2005	Magazine Design Awards Best Cover
2014	BSME Digital Art Director Of The Year	2004	Association Of Online Publishers Awards Best Website
2014	DMA Designer Of The Year	2004	BSME Magazine Of The Year
2014	TCADP Media Award	2003	PPA Writer Of The Year
2014	FPA Feature Of The Year	2002	BSME Magazine Of The Year
2014	FPA Journalist Of The Year	2002	PPA Writer Of The Year
2014	Amnesty International Media Award	2001	BSME Magazine Of The Year
2014	PPA Editor Of The Year	2001	PPA Designer Of The Year
2014	FMJA Online Fashion Journalist Of The Year	2001	Printing World Award
2013	EICA Media Commentator Of The Year	2000	Total Design Award
2013	DMA Men's Lifestyle Magazine Of The Year	2000	Jasmine Award Winner
2013	BSME Editor Of The Year	1999	Printing World Award
2013	FMJA Outstanding Contribution To London Collections Men	1999	Jasmine Award Winner
2013	PPA Magazine Writer Of The Year	1999	PPA Designer Of The Year
2012	Mark Boxer Award	1995	Ace Press Award Circulation
2012	BSME Editor Of The Year	1995	Ace Press Award Promotion
2012	DMA Lifestyle Magazine Of The Year	1995	PPA Columnist Of The Year
2012	Help For Heroes Outstanding Contribution	1994	PPA Publisher Of The Year
2012	Px3 Prix De La Photographie Paris Gold Medal	1991	British Press Circulation Award Best Promotion Of A Consumer Magazine

GQ's doctor of horology resolves your dilemmas in perfect time

By Teo van den Broeke



Once upon a time in...
GQ Watch And Jewellery

I'm in the market for some jewellery but I have no idea where to start. The most hardware I've ever worn is a classic Omega Seamaster and even that took a while to feel natural on my wrist. I'm not looking for anything too out there, perhaps just a simple bracelet or an understated pendant – I'm thinking more Harry Styles at a festival than Demis Roussos on the beach. NB, I'm 36 and work in an office. Any ideas most gratefully received.

Mark, Sunderland

Dear Mark,

In honesty, jewellery should be approached with caution whatever your occupation and whatever your age – the last thing you want is to look like Peter Stringfellow sunning it up on the Costa Del Sol. That being said, there are an increasing number of options for regular guys looking to make a statement with something more than a watch.

Saint Laurent, the ultra-hip Kering-owned brand with a Parisian accent, does an excellent line in pendants, which look ace peeking out from the collar of a shirt. Likewise, Maison Margiela does a surprisingly nice range of un-signet-ring-y signet rings. It's arguably British brand Tateossian, however, which is most worthy of your attention. Bangle-wise, I would recommend opting for one of the "large silver cube" styles. Like a tennis bracelet for men, it'll look great worn with your Seamaster. If, however, you're worried about scratches on that lovely bezel of yours, one of the label's woven silver bangles will probably sit a safe enough distance from your watch, thanks to its solid construction. For something a little fancier, Tateossian's beaded bracelets will look great with a tan – but, given that you're writing from Sunderland, Mark, I'd recommend you go for one of the earthen-hued Nugget bracelets instead.

I know your magazine tends to specialise in ultra-expensive, beautifully made timepieces, but in honesty, most of those tend to sit well outside of my budget. If I was looking for something more in the £100 to £500 price bracket, what would you recommend?

Matthieu, Wrexham

Dear Matthieu,

I feel your pain. Journalist salaries don't allow for snazzy watch purchases too often either. My answer is a simple one. If you're looking for something both minimal and trendy, head to Mondaine. Something a little more directional? Head to Boss. But for a classic, easy-wearing all-rounder, you could do far worse than British manufacturer Accurist. The company's classic line is as simple and chic as it is inexpensive. Likewise, the Signature range has a sexy, sporty quality all of its own. Where other more affordable watch marques tend to ape the more expensive brands' styles, Accurist beats a singular rhythm and the resulting timepieces are all the more appealing for it.

Brad Pitt's cuff watch in *Once Upon A Time In Hollywood*. Discuss. (Oh, and where can I find one?)

Tim, Bexleyheath

Dear Tim,

Cuff watches (also known as bund watches) have been popular since the early Seventies, though they've actually been around a lot longer. Defined by a timepiece – usually something sporty, a chronograph, say – sat atop a wide leather cuff that wraps the wrist, bund watches were originally designed to protect Second World War fighter pilots from the metal elements of their timepieces becoming prohibitively hot during sorties. Latterly, Steve McQueen was a bund watch fan and more recently David Beckham's been seen wearing a bund strap on his Tudor. The bund you're referencing, however, took the look to ultra-desirable new heights. The gold-hued Citizen 8110 Bullhead, which was matched with a tan leather wrist cuff, offset Brad's own tan perfectly and had a neat Seventies appeal. When it comes to your own bund watch, less is more, in my opinion. Italian leather-goods manufacturer Stefano Bemer does an excellent line in elegant bund straps to which you can attach your own timepiece, while Tudor's Heritage Ranger is a thing of muscular beauty. **GQ**

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The Directory

GQ Watch Guide

Moving heaven and earth,
we reveal the brands making
waves and the models that will
stand for decades to come...

Compiled by **Simon de Burton**



A Lange & Söhne

To mark the 25th anniversary of its revival following the reunification of Germany, the historic Glashütte brand created a series of ten special editions of its cornerstone Lange 1 watch.

Watch of the collection

The Datograph Perpetual Tourbillon's gorgeous salmon-coloured dial is difficult to resist. The watch combines a flyback chronograph with a jumping date perpetual calendar and a tourbillon regulator, all within a 41.5mm white-gold case. No fewer than 729 components make up the exquisitely decorated movement of this horological masterpiece. **£255,000.** alange-soehne.com



Audemars Piguet

Horological pundits took to social media earlier this year to express their outrage at the design of AP's all-new Code 11.59 collection – deemed by the online “experts” as neither a sports nor a dress watch. But wait, didn't the pundits of 1972 dismiss its Gérald Genta-designed Royal Oak as a no-hoper? On that basis, we're going to give Code 11.59 a chance to mature.

Watch of the collection

We're backing the Flyback Chronograph, which offers an in-house Calibre 4401 column wheel chronograph, a “jumping” calendar and 70 hours of power reserve in white-gold/black-dial or pink-gold/blue-dial combinations. **£37,500.** audemarspiguet.com



Alpina

Alpina continues to pursue the hybrid market with its Alpiner X sports watch, aimed at fitness fans and outdoorsy types. Capable of measuring everything from altitude and distance travelled to atmospheric pressure, the watch stores saved data on the cloud so it can be shared with other devices.

Watch of the collection

Call us old fashioned, but we prefer the latest take on the Seastrong Diver Heritage – a reinterpretation of the Alpina 10 Super Compressor of 1969. This 50th anniversary model combines a 42mm steel case finished in bronze PVD. It's supplied with both leather and rubber straps. **£1,495.** alpinawatches.com



Avi-8

Aeronautically inspired watch brand Avi-8 has had a busy few months, launching watches to commemorate both George Bulman, chief test pilot on the Hawker Hurricane development programme, and the 50th anniversary of the flight from London to New York made by a RAF Hawker Harrier jump jet.

Watch of the collection

Forgive the lack of patriotism, but we're gunning for the P-51 Mustang Bottisham Edition. The self-winding watch pays tribute to the US Air Force 361 Fighter Group that flew Mustangs out of RAF Bottisham in Cambridgeshire and features a dial inspired by the planes' cockpit instruments and fuselage insignia. **From £290.** avi-8.co.uk



Andersen Geneve

The watch house founded 40 years ago by Svend Andersen found success as a maker of erotic designs, such as the Eros 69 of 2007, an apparently conventional three-handed watch when viewed from the front until the case was flipped to reveal the scene of a *ménage à trois* in full swing.

Watch of the collection

The maker has announced a new series dedicated to oenophiles. Each of the 12 features a revolving disc that makes one complete revolution every 365 days, during which a dozen hand-enamelled images depicting the monthly stages of the winemaking process are displayed around the dial. **£40,800.** andersen-geneve.ch



Ball Watch Co

Ball Watch Co recently reaffirmed its adventurous spirit by sponsoring an eleven-metre sailing boat called Maewan, which will undertake 35 voyages across the globe. The six-person crew will be led by Erwan Le Lann, a French mountaineer and marine guide who will travel 41,000 miles to conduct scientific projects and raise awareness of environmental issues.

Watch of the collection

The Roadmaster Skipper, “launched” in tandem with the Maewan project, is a chronometer-certified sailing watch that's water resistant to 200 metres. Available in 40mm or 43mm case sizes, each version is limited to 1,000 examples. **From £1,940.** ballwatch.com



Bamford Watch Department

George Bamford's Mayfair watch, originally created as a stand-in for customers to wear while their "real" watches were being serviced, proved such a hit that it became available for all to buy in 2017.

Watch of the collection

As the official customising house of LVMH watches, BWD has now got together with artist Black Badger to create just ten TAG Heuer Carrera watches with multicoloured dials made from so-called "Fordite" – the accumulation of overspray found in automotive paint booths. **£5,500. bamfordwatchdepartment.com**



Bell & Ross

Bell & Ross has now added the all-new BR-05 to its portfolio, a 40mm model that takes the form of a "soft square". The French brand has also reinforced its collaboration with Renault Formula One via four new RS19 watches featuring the team's signature yellow highlights.

Watch of the collection

The first Bell & Ross watches were made in 1992 by the German firm Sinn, where B&R cofounder and designer Bruno Belamich worked as an intern. Those original models were round-cased, army-style pieces – a look that has now been revisited with the new BRV2-92 three-hander and BRV2-94 chronograph with "military beige" dials. **From £3,350. bellross.com**



Baume

Baume – the eco-friendly, millennial-chasing maker of low-cost watches – might have been around for less than two years, but it already claims to offer no fewer than 2,300 permutations in its quartz range and 432 in its automatic line. It's a case of "build it yourself", using the decidedly addictive configurator.

Watch of the collection

We eventually alighted on the 41mm moonphase model, which can be tailored to taste with features such as cork, cotton or Alcantara straps, white or grey dials, steel, black or golden hands and the engraving of your choice. **£500. baumewatches.com**



Blancpain

As part of its ongoing Ocean Commitment programme, Blancpain backed this summer's "Gombessa V" research expedition led by Laurent Ballesta, the marine naturalist, underwater photographer and expert diver who the brand has sponsored since 2012.

Watch of the collection

We'd certainly dig deep for the new Fifty Fathoms "Nageurs De Combat" special edition – an excellent reinterpretation of the original model designed for French military divers in 1953. Blancpain has been given special permission to engrave the combat diver qualification badge on the back of the 45mm watch. **£11,890. blancpain.com**



Baume & Mercier

Baume & Mercier's Clifton Baumatic took Richemont's entry-level luxury watchmaker to a new level thanks to its specially developed movement, offering anti-magnetism up to 1,500 gauss, five days of power reserve, chronometer accuracy and minimum five-year maintenance intervals. And now that same movement has been developed into...

Watch of the collection

...the fabulous, classic-looking Clifton Baumatic Perpetual Calendar, featuring a 42mm, red-gold case and a calendar mechanism that won't need adjusting until 1 March 2100. Except it will, of course, because you're bound to forget to keep it running. **£19,300. baume-et-mercier.com**



Boss

Hugo Boss is banking on the future of electric motorsport, as the official partner of the Formula E street race series, through which it gets to use drivers Lucas di Grassi, André Lotterer, Jérôme d'Ambrosio and current drivers' champion Jean-Éric Vergne as models for both its clothes and its watches.

Watch of the collection

The Trophy appeals, with its crisp white dial, clear blue detailing and matching tachymeter bezel. The stainless-steel case is well finished for a watch in the price range and there's a decent steel bracelet to keep it on your wrist too. **£399. bosswatches.co.uk**



Breguet

It's commonly thought that the tourbillon was invented by horological genius Abraham-Louis Breguet. Wrong! The mechanism, which houses the escapement in a rotating cage to counteract the effect of gravity, was initiated by John Arnold, but he died in 1799 without bringing the idea to fruition, leaving his friend Breguet to perfect and patent it.

Watch of the collection

It had better be a tourbillon. The brilliant Reference 5395 features a tourbillon-equipped movement just 3mm thick that's skeletonised to the max and decorated with all the finishing techniques for which the Breguet name is synonymous. **From £177,400. breguet.com**



Bulgari

The Roman jeweller continues to push the envelope by pursuing its "less is more" thin theme. The latest version of its bestselling Octo Finissimo Automatic is made entirely from ceramic and, at 5.5mm thick, it's the slimmest self-winding ceramic watch on the market.

Watch of the collection

Even more impressive is the Octo Finissimo Chronograph GMT, which, in true Bulgari style, manages to break a record that has stood for more than 30 years by being the thinnest mechanical chronograph ever made. Despite measuring just 6.9mm, it combines a self-winding column wheel chronograph with a GMT function. **£15,200. bulgari.com**



Breitling

Two years into his tenure as Breitling CEO, watch industry veteran Georges Kern has radically streamlined the brand's offering, hooked-up with various new partners, including the Ironman triathlon series and the Biarritz Wheels & Waves festival, and established ambassador "squads" in the fields of flying, surfing, exploration and cinema.

Watch of the collection

Another new deal, this time with Norton Motorcycles, has produced the Premier B01 Chronograph 42 Norton Edition, with a dial finished in Norton's signature black and gold colour scheme and a caseback decorated with the marque's famous logo. **£6,700. breitling.com**



Bulova

Bulova's place as a horological innovator is now celebrated on the firm's website with an interesting and fun-to-use interactive archive that reveals just how many firsts the (now Japanese-owned) American-rooted brand has been responsible for.

Watch of the collection

It has to be the Computron Re-Edition, a 21st-century version of its digital driver's watch first seen during the Seventies. The distinctive trapezoid case uses a side-on display to make it easier to read while holding a steering wheel and, like the original model, features an LED readout that needs manual activation. **From £229. bulova.com**



Bremont

Bremont has reinforced its military connections by becoming the first luxury watchmaker to be granted MOD clearance to use the "signs, symbols and insignia" of the British armed forces. The brand marked the moment with three new models: the entry-level Broadsword (£2,595), the £2,795 naval-inspired Argonaut and the Bremont Arrow, costing £3,595.

Watch of the collection

Five years after making a special series of watches to complement the six Special GT E-Type "continuation" cars built by Jaguar Classic, Bremont has created a model to go with the legendary D-Type, which is limited to 300 examples. **£5,495. bremont.com**



Carl F Bucherer

Eagle-eyed horophiles who have seen Keanu Reeves reprise the title role in *John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum* will have spotted a proliferation of product from Carl F Bucherer. Wick, the "Bowery King" (Laurence Fishburne) and Sofia (Halle Berry) all wear watches by the Lucerne-based maker.

Watch of the collection

The Patravi Scubatec in steel with black honeycomb dial features a ceramic bezel and a chronometer-certified movement, while the 44.6mm diameter case is sufficiently beefy to ensure water resistance down to a lung-crushing 500 metres. **£5,500. carl-f-bucherer.com**



Cartier

The “king of jewellers” celebrates its famous Tonneau model this year through a series of limited-edition Collection Privée watches. Launched in 1906, the barrel-shaped Tonneau is reinterpreted as a simple, hand-wound, two-hander model. Each is available in pink gold or platinum and limited to 100 examples.

Watch of the collection

The story goes that Louis Cartier created the first men’s wristwatch in 1904 for his aviator friend Alberto Santos-Dumont. Despite being tweaked numerous times over the decades, the essential shape remains the same and a Santos is simply one watch that everyone needs to own. **£3,100. cartier.com**



Chanel

This year’s 20th anniversary of the unisex J12 must have been an occasion that Chanel’s designers were dreading, because it would surely mean having to “refresh” the watch so successfully penned at the first attempt. In the event, the redesign amounted to nothing more than a few barely noticeable tweaks and the addition of a new Kenissi movement, facilitated by Chanel’s purchase of 20 per cent of the Geneva-based manufacture.

Watch of the collection

The new Monsieur Edition Noire. A blackened steel and ceramic case keeps the price low, but the words “reassuringly expensive” still apply. Only 55 are to be made. **£23,400. chanel.com**



Casio

No doubt collectors of Casio watches are all clamouring for one of the 200 Oceanus Mantas being made by the Japanese firm to mark the 15th anniversary of its diving model, which now includes Bluetooth compatibility, radio wave reception and 100-metres water resistance.

Watch of the collection

Another anniversary model, this time the new GWR-B1000X, which features carbon composites in its case, strap and dial. Handsome red accents complete the look of the lightest Gravitymaster series G-Shock to date. **£899. casio.co.uk**



Chaumet

While lesser maisons may strive to expand their men’s watch offering year on year, the effortlessly superior Chaumet has remained quietly confident in its signature Dandy model since launching it in 2003. And, truth be told, it’s rather refreshing not to be spoiled for choice...

Watch of the collection

That’ll be a Dandy. And, this time, we’ll go for the large version (don’t be afraid, it’s only 38mm) with a steel case, blue sunray dial and blue alligator strap. **£4,230. chaumet.com**



Certina

Demonstrating concern for the oceans is all the rage among watch brands these days, though it’s true to say that Certina has been following that righteous path for years. It now marks the 60th anniversary of the Sea Turtle Conservancy with an updated version of its DS Action Diver costing a turtle-y reasonable £730.

Watch of the collection

For £100 more, you’ll get you a DS Action Diver in featherweight, salt-resistant titanium. The 43mm case features a screw-down back and crown, while the dial markings are Super-Luminova coated for legibility in the deep. The bracelet comes with a built-in extender for wearing over wet suits. **£830. certina.com**



Chopard

Chopard’s Karl-Friedrich Scheufele has broken new horological ground by opening a boutique and inviting other watchmakers to display their wares in it. Situated at One Monte Carlo, “Art In Time” offers watches not only by Chopard and high-end sister brands Chopard LUC and Ferdinand Berthoud, but also by independent makers such as MB&F, Urwerk and Ressence.

Watch of the collection

The Mille Miglia Zagato chronograph seems like a sure-fire classic. Marking the centenary of the Italian coachbuilder, the 42mm steel-cased watch has a lacquered red dial subtly decorated with a “Z” motif. Just 100 will be available, so be quick. **£5,560. chopard.com**



Christopher Ward

Established 15 years ago and now with its own movement facility in Switzerland, Christopher Ward has secured a £6.25 million cash injection from private equity firm BGF. Currently turning over £10.5m per year, the Berkshire-based direct seller is keen to expand its presence in America.

Watch of the collection

Christopher Ward marks the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 space mission with the C1 Moonglow, equipped with a pair of 3-D revolving moons that shine in the dark. **From £1,695. christopherward.co.uk**



Citizen

Citizen's stand at this year's Baselworld watch fair was dazzling, to say the least, thanks to the fact that the Japanese brand had suspended a remarkable 70,000 watch movement base plates within its exhibition space.

Watch of the collection

In 2019 Citizen marked 30 years of its Promaster range of high-performance models designed for land, sea and air. Of the three limited editions produced for the occasion, we favoured the Aqualand 200-metre dive watch that offers an analogue depth gauge capable of registering down to 70 metres and a power reserve indicator for monitoring the Eco Drive solar-charged movement. **£479. citizenwatch.com**



Culem

Culem is a new brand launched by entrepreneur Matthew Cule using funds raised on Kickstarter. Having travelled to 64 countries and all seven continents in his former career, Cule decided to create a GMT watch with a caseback engraved with 24 destinations and their correct time zone differences in relation to both GMT and BST.

Watch of the collection

The dial of the Portal edition features a remarkable world map executed in 3-D that can be had in grey, blue, black or champagne variations and with steel, black PVD or gold-plated cases. All feature good quality ETA movements. **From £1,350. culemwatch.com**



Corum

Back in the early noughties, when Corum was enjoying its "golden era" under the ownership of the late, lamented and somewhat eccentric Severin Wunderman, its stand at the Baselworld watch fair enjoyed a prime position near the entrance and always drew the crowds. Cut to 2019 and...

Watch of the collection

Following its departure from Baselworld, little new emerged this year other than a promise that the brand will go "back to basics" in 2020. In the meantime, we'll place our bets on the classic Admiral 42 sailing watch with a blue dial adorned with the model's signature nautical pennant designs. **£3,700. corum.ch**



Diesel

It's said that the trend for oversized, statement-making watches is waning. The folks at Diesel seem to disagree...

Watch of the collection

The Griffo chronograph is certainly unconventional, with its left-mounted crown, push buttons and hefty bumpers to protect the translucent orange-coloured crystal. **£229. diesel.com**



Dior

Dior has attracted considerable praise over the last 12 months for its bold, imaginative designs that manifest themselves in technically adept watches. Sadly, they're almost all designed for women.

Watch of the collection

There might not be anything new in the Chiffre Rouge line of watches for men, but the 38mm AO2 chronograph remains as quirkily cool as it ever was. And there's a nice Zenith movement within. **£4,750. dior.com**



Emporio Armani

The Italian fashion brand continues to extend its range of smart and hybrid watches, with the offering now running to 14 different models costing from £229 to £389, making them considerably more affordable than similar devices from other big dial names.

Watch of the collection

This Swiss-made, tonneau-cased number with a "hammered leather" strap is elegant and versatile, looking the part both day and night. It might have the appearance of a far more expensive watch, but a quartz movement keeps the price down. **£519. armani.com**



Doxa

When it comes to dive watches, models such as the Rolex Submariner and Blancpain Fifty Fathoms inevitably spring to mind. But it was the historic Doxa brand that was the first to offer an affordable tool watch dedicated to sport divers with the introduction of its Sub 200 T Graph in 1969 – which was the first ever timepiece to feature an orange dial.

Watch of the collection

To mark the 50th anniversary of the Sub 200 T Graph, Doxa has created just 13 18-carat gold versions powered by original Valjoux 7734 movements from the factory archives. But they're not cheap... **From £37,500. doxawatches.com**



Farer

Founded just four years ago by a group of watch-loving entrepreneurs headed by Paul Sweetenham, Farer hit the ground running with its combination of British design and Swiss manufacture. All its watches are produced by Roventa-Henex, the private label-maker that quietly works for some of the world's best-known dial names.

Watch of the collection

Farer offers a comprehensive range of manual-wind and automatic pieces, including chronograph, GMT, time-only and dive variations. We like the Segrave chrono, named after the late land and water speed record holder Henry Segrave. **£1,675. farer.com**



Ebel

The word "stagnant" could fairly be applied to Ebel's men's watches offering, which has barely changed in years. Why this once highly respected dial name doesn't delve into its fabulous back catalogue of Sixties designs is beyond us. If such a thing happens, prepare to be amazed...

Watch of the collection

The 41mm Discovery with black or racing-green dial and orange highlights is a daily wearer you wouldn't mind looking at. **£1,095. ebel.com**



Favre-Leuba

Founded in 1718, but now owned by a branch of the Tata engineering group, Favre-Leuba specialises in ultra-tough tool watches with special features such as depth gauges and altimeters. Buyers of its new Extreme Black Raider Bivouac 9000 will be entered into a draw to take part in a trek through the alps.

Watch of the collection

The Bathy 120 Memodepth is a dive watch with a depth gauge capable of recording descents of up to 120 metres. The hand-wound movement features a power-reserve indicator and the 48mm case is water-resistant to 200 metres. Because it's titanium, it's surprisingly light. **£7,800. favre-leuba.com**



Fossil

Founded 35 years ago by former Texas University student Tom Kartsotis as an importer of inexpensive Chinese-made watches, Fossil now employs more than 14,000 people and is one of the biggest hitters in the timepiece world. It has eight dial names of its own and produces watches under the banners of a dozen other fashion brands.

Watch of the collection

It's about the simplest-looking Fossil there is (and the range is huge), but the new Forrester three-hand date has retro appeal in spades. The 42mm steel case is fitted with a rugged leather strap – and you get a three-line engraving included in the price. **£89. fossil.com**



GC

If you love the go-anywhere-with-anything brio of your Guess watch, then you'll be pleased to know there's a further rung on the horological ladder to explore: the fashion brand's other dial name, GC.

Watch of the collection

Can't quite reach – or bother to wait for – the new Rolex GMT-Master with Pepsi bezel? Then think about GC's Structura dive watch on a blue silicone strap. It's water-resistant to 100 metres and contains a good-quality, Swiss-made quartz movement. **£275. gcwatches.com**



FP Journe

For eight years, François-Paul Journe has been developing the Elégante, fitted with an electro-mechanical movement that automatically switches to "standby" mode if it's motionless for more than 35 minutes. A microprocessor keeps track of the time, enabling the watch to reset precisely on demand.

Watch of the collection

To mark 20 years since his first tourbillon watches, Journe has created the Tourbillon Souverain Vertical, which features a vertically mounted tourbillon cage so the device remains constant in all positions. The 42mm watch comes in platinum or red gold. **From £200,000. fpjourne.com**



Georg Jensen

If Scandinavian minimalism is your thing, look no further than the masters of the craft at Georg Jensen. The brand was named after the Danish jeweller-silversmith who founded it 115 years ago in Copenhagen, subsequently expanding the business with stores in Berlin, London and New York prior to his death in 1935.

Watch of the collection

We like the 41mm Koppel model for its delicious, forest-green dial. It's named after Henning Koppel, who was head designer at GJ from 1945 until the late Seventies. **£795. georgjensen.com**



Frederique Constant

The affordable Swiss-made brand continues to develop its "Hybrid Manufacture 3.0" smartwatch line. It's the first to combine a traditional clockwork movement with a battery-powered module to provide smartwatch functionality. Following the 2018 launch, three new models have been added for this year, one in steel and two in rose-gold plate.

Watch of the collection

Frederique Constant has produced various versions of its Vintage Healey Rally Chronograph – and one of the best is the recently introduced navy-dial model with matching blue strap and a rose gold-plated case. It's great value too. **£2,895. frederiqueconstant.com**



Girard-Perregaux

Girard-Perregaux opted for a blue theme for its 2019 launches, with the 1966 Earth To Sky edition, Cosmos high complication, Laureato Absolute and Laureato Perpetual all featuring dials of rich ultramarine and navy.

Watch of the collection

With its 47mm, blackened-titanium case containing a 362-part, hand-wound movement equipped with a tourbillon, two time zones and day and night indicator, the aforementioned Cosmos is quite the eyeful. It also stars two 3-D representations of the Earth and the sky, which revolve in real time. The latter has a luminous sky chart that only become visible after dark. **£255,000. girard-perregaux.com**



Glashütte Original

Glashütte Original keeps the watchmaking tradition alive by operating its own in-house training centre, called the Alfred Helwig School Of Watchmaking. This summer, ten watchmakers and four toolmakers graduate, the majority of whom have been offered jobs with the brand.

Watch of the collection

In 1969, the Spezimatic Type RP TS 200 was made by East Germany's state-owned watchmaker Glashütter Uhrenbetriebe, part of which became Glashütte Original after reunification. Glashütte has re-created it in various versions, calling them SeaQ. We like the limited-edition 1969 model – but only 69 will be made. **£7,200. glashuette-original.com**



Gucci

After last year's launch of the brilliant Le Marche Des Merveilles, featuring a green leather strap and dial illustrated with a slithering kingsnake, few thought Gucci could surpass itself in 2019 – but it did.

Watch of the collection

It's called The Grip and it's said to have been inspired by Seventies skateboard culture. Available in 35mm and 38mm sizes, the watch features a digital disc display behind three apertures and comes as a bracelet model in yellow-gold PVD or stainless steel or on a red or yellow strap. It's really quite "rad" (as we believe they say down at the skatepark).

Around £1,500. gucci.com



Greubel Forsey

Founders Robert Greubel and Stephen Forsey have been working on a side project called Mechanical Nano, which aims to reduce watch components from their already microscopic size in order to free-up case space and minimise energy consumption. The results promise to be spectacular, if baffling.

Watch of the collection

The GMT Quadruple Tourbillon. Just 39.5mm in diameter, it contains a 705-part movement incorporating four tourbillons, three timezone displays, a universal time function and the exquisite 3-D globe that accurately replicates the revolution of the Earth. Just 66 examples will be made. **£650,000. greubelforsey.com**



Hamilton

Although Hamilton has been owned by the Swiss Swatch Group since the Seventies, it remains proud of its American heritage and, in particular, the connection it has enjoyed with Hollywood since *Shanghai Express* 87 years ago. The firm's watches have since been seen in more than 500 movies.

Watch of the collection

In 2014's *Interstellar*, Coop (Matthew McConaughey) uses a special version of the Khaki Field to communicate with his daughter, Murph (Jessica Chastain), via Morse code. Now there's a replica, complete with the word "Eureka" printed in Morse on the seconds hand.

£835. hamiltonwatch.com



Graff

The ultra-high-end, UK-based jeweller caters exclusively to the super-rich. But the fact that there are more and more of them means it has recently opened in Monaco, Hong Kong and Paris.

Watch of the collection

Graff focuses on the global threat to wildlife with its new GyroGraff Endangered Species watches. Our favourite shows a proud tiger created from a 3-D mosaic incorporating aventurine, blackened gold and diamonds. Other animals include a tiger made from yellow and cognac diamonds.

£700,000. graff.com



Harry Winston

Harry Winston's first co-branded creation is ten watch-and-pen sets with high-end pen-maker Nakaya. The dials are decorated with *urushi* (lacquer), *maki-e* (gold dust) and *raden* (mother-of-pearl) for an image of HW's Fifth Avenue flagship beneath the *yo-zora* (night sky).

Watch of the collection

The Project Z special editions have cases made from Zaliun: an exclusive dark-grey alloy that is ultra-light, non-allergenic, non-corrosive and tough. The latest addition to the Z range is the Project Z13, which has a moonphase display as well as regular hours, minutes and date indications within a complex, multilayered dial.

£19,200. harrywinston.com



Hublot

It's impossible to keep pace with Hublot's output of new editions. Of late, we've noticed models made with sculptor Richard Orlinski, a Capri island special by Lapo Elkann, something for the Cricket World Cup, a Unico for golfers, a rainbow effort with musician Nicky Jam and a Big Bang inspired by tattoo studio Sang Bleu.

Watch of the collection

The Classic Fusion Ferrari GT was created in collaboration with Flavio Manzoni, head of Ferrari's Centro Stile. The 45mm case is all-new and can be had in titanium, gold or carbon. Inside, you'll find Hublot's in-house Unico Hub1280 flyback chronograph movement. **From £18,200. hublot.com**



Hermès

When it comes to the "art" of a watch, few makers do it better than Hermès. This year, the legendary leathersmith unveiled a series of 12 dials depicting the profile of a horse's head made from 2,200 minuscule squares of leather, plus another limited edition of 12 decorated with an image of Tanzanian zebras created using calfskin marquetry.

Watch of the collection

We've been pleased to see the gradual return of bund-style straps this year, and have suddenly realised how good the evergreen classic that is the Cape Cod watch can look when fitted with one, especially the larger 33mm square version.

£2,650. hermes.com



IWC

Among the worthwhile projects IWC CEO Christoph Grainger-Herr has instigated since assuming the role three years ago is the brand's backing of The Longest Flight project, which aims to see a Second World War Spitfire fighter plane circumnavigate the world.

Watch of the collection

This journey inspired the Timezoner Spitfire Edition, a 250-piece series based on the standard Timezoner model. When the bezel is turned until a chosen city reaches 12 o'clock, the hands adjust to the relevant timezone. The caseback is decorated with an outline of a Spitfire above a stylised globe and the relevant edition number. **£11,450. IWC.com**



H Moser & Cie

You can always count on H Moser to do something silly to promote itself at Geneva's annual SIHH watch show. This year, it created a one-off watch with a dial made from stone and moss that was mounted on a strap woven with grass. It was, allegedly, an expression of the brand's concern for the environment.

Watch of the collection

The Swiss Alp Watch Concept Black, which has no logo, indices or hands. The time is gleaned from the minute repeater mechanism in a platinum case shaped like an Apple watch. Behind the black dial lurks an exquisitely finished, hand-wound tourbillon movement.

Around £280,000. h-moser.com



Jacob & Co

Argentinian soccer hero Lionel Messi is the latest celebrity recruited to the fold of jeweller-to-the-stars Jacob Arabo. The three-year deal will see a range of Messi watches produced, the first of which is a version of the Epic X Chrono finished in the colours of the Argentinian flag and bearing Messi's signature on the back.

Watch of the collection

The Oil Pump features a liquid-filled "oil reservoir" container and a pair of fully operational derricks to pump it around the dial, with the whole show visible from all angles thanks to multiple sapphire crystals. Behind the animation lies a hand-wound tourbillon movement. **Around £310,000. jacobandco.com**



Jaeger-LeCoultre

The historic maison has announced that every watch (and clock) it sells will have an unprecedented eight-year warranty. After registering the serial number online, buyers will receive a four-year alert to take it for a free “functional check” of water-resistance, magnetism and precision.

Watch of the collection

The Master Ultra Thin Moon Enamel is a 100-piece limited edition with a hand-guilloché sunray finish coated with blue translucent enamel. The white-gold case is 39mm in diameter and 10mm in depth, housing the 925/2 calibre movement, which offers 70 hours of power reserve. **£32,100. jaegerlecoultre.com**



Links Of London

Unlike many companies that sell affordable watches, Links Of London hasn't allowed its offering to become too large and unwieldy. And yet, for those on a budget, there really does seem to be something for everyone, ranging from chunky sports chronographs to the type of dress watches that your grandfather might approve of.

Watch of the collection

Despite the price and the fact that it can never lay claim to being an example of haute horlogerie, the white-dial Greenwich GMT from Links is possibly one of the most nicely executed, legible and usable timezone watches we've ever seen. **£395. linksoflondon.com**



Junghans

In its heyday, Junghans employed 3,000 people and produced 3m timepieces a year, ranging from clocks (assembled by trainees on the factory's ground floor) to high-precision chronographs (assembled by master watchmakers at the top).

Watch of the collection

Not just a watch, but a clock, too. The Max Bill Edition Set (limited to 222 pieces) comprises a self-winding chronograph and a table clock with mechanical eight-day movement. It celebrates the famous architect, artist and industrial designer who created the kitchen clocks that Junghans sold in their millions during the Fifties and Sixties. **£3,440. junghans.de**



Longines

This year, the great Walter von Kanel celebrated his half-century as an employee of Longines and 30 years as its president. He doesn't have a smartphone and he doesn't have a computer – but that hasn't stopped the 78-year-old from achieving an annual turnover of more than £1.2 billion for the Swatch Group-owned brand.

Watch of the collection

Rising sea levels must be a concern, judging by the number of dive watches released of late. Longines' most interesting is a new version of its Hydro Conquest model made entirely from ceramic. The blackened case is complemented by a black ceramic bezel insert and a black rubber strap. **£2,700. longines.com**



Larsson & Jennings

Set up in 2012 by UK entrepreneur Andrew Jennings from his living room, Larsson & Jennings is one of the most successful new affordable watch brands. Its products are now sold in 150 outlets around the UK.

Watch of the collection

The Wave is a smartwatch that looks just like a traditional analogue bracelet watch, but can alert the wearer to emails and texts, control music, take photographs and monitor heart rate. It also features a concierge button that can be used “to get someone else to do the things you don't have time for”. **£295. larssonjennings.com**



Louis Erard

Louis Erard is reinventing itself this year, citing the belief that consumers want less, but better, stuff. The firm's first move was to commission Eric Giroud, the respected watch designer who has worked with everyone from MB&F to Tissot, to create a trio of limited-edition versions of its Excellence Regulator.

Watch of the collection

It's not the type of watch Louis Erard is known for, but we like the 1931 titanium chronograph, with its stylish grey dial and leather-lined black nylon strap. **£1,995. montres-louiserard.ch**



Louis Vuitton

LV's Tambour Damier Cobalt was one of the best-looking watch launches of the summer. The dial is textured with the Damier pattern used in the firm's iconic luggage.

Watch of the collection

As good as the Damier Cobalt is, the Voyager Minute Repeater Flying Tourbillon takes some beating – its hand-wound movement assembled by a watchmaker at LV's Geneva workshop. A skeletonised dial and transparent caseback allow a view of the mechanism, which has tiny gongs and hammers sounding the hours, quarters and minutes and a flying tourbillon that serves as the "V" of Vuitton and the Roman numeral five. **£270,000. louisvuitton.com**



Marloe Watch Company

Have you ever liked a watch so much that you've wanted to buy the company? Now you can – or part of it, at least. Oxfordshire-based Marloe opened a financing round on Crowdfunder that will give anyone willing to invest £10 and up a stake in the company and "exclusive rewards"

Watch of the Collection

The Haskell is a rugged adventure watch named after the Haskell Strait that Captain Scott crossed during his fateful trip to the South Pole. Each watch is individually numbered and features an engraving of Antarctica on the caseback. **£745. marloewatchcompany.com**



Luminox

This year was the 30th anniversary of the founding of Luminox, the California-based maker of ultra-tough sports watches. It marked the occasion with the Sport Timer 0900 Series, a 42mm stainless-steel watch with a ceramic bezel and a US star stamped on the caseback.

Watch of the collection

The 44mm Atacama Field Automatic 1900 Series features a crisp, cream-coloured dial with lovely orange detailing that lights up after dark thanks to the array of micro gas tubes lurking underneath. Fitted with an automatic movement, it's water-resistant to 200 metres and is supplied on a khaki-coloured canvas strap. **£790. luminox.com**



Maurice Lacroix

As one of many brands to initiate new marketing methods of late, Maurice Lacroix has been rolling out its "Timecode Challenge" events in ten cities around the world. Inaugurated in London in May, the challenges are essentially urban treasure hunts, the winners of which receive a special Aikon Venturer watch.

Watch of the collection

You don't, however, need to participate in order to get your hands on an Aikon Venturer, because the 43mm self-winding sports watch, featuring a special blue dial, is also available as a 500-piece limited edition that's supplied with both a steel bracelet and a blue and orange quick-change leather strap. **£1,990. mauricelacroix.com**



MB&F

The high-end niche maker is becoming almost as well known for the sci-fi inspired clocks it makes in conjunction with Swiss specialist L'Epée as it is for the watches it calls "horological machines". For the biennial Only Watch charity auction held in November, MB&F contributed a unique version of its zany Tom & T-Rex clock that features a stylised human form atop a Murano glass dome.

Watch of the collection

The HM7 Aquapod could have been born straight from the undersea world of a Jules Verne novel. Originally launched in titanium two years ago, the latest version has a platinum case and red detailing. **£135,000. mbandf.com**



Michael Kors

One of the many fashion house watches to be produced by the Fossil Group, the Michael Kors range runs to no fewer than 175 different models...

Watch of the collection

The Blake Rainbow measures a manly 42mm in diameter. As you'll have guessed, it gets its name from that funky rainbow-striped strap and dial. **£189. michaelkors.com**



Meccaniche Veloci

Automotive-inspired watch brand Meccaniche Veloci was founded in Milan in 2006, its first product being the radical-looking QuattroValvole featuring a dial set with four individual subdials. Although undoubtedly an acquired taste, MV's watches have attracted a cult following in many parts of the world.

Watch of the collection

As the name suggests, the Nardi Edition is the result of a collaboration with the Italian manufacturer Nardi, which since the late Fifties has been famed for producing high-quality wooden steering wheels for the likes of Ferrari, Maserati and Aston Martin. Just 50 will be available. **£10,000. meccanicheveloci.com**



Montblanc

Montblanc went back to nature at this year's SIHH fair, displaying a booth featuring a plant wall, waterfall and images of mountain views. But it was Davide Cerrato, the Morgan-driving design boss of Montblanc's watch division, who stole the show with his beautifully nuanced 1858 Split Second monopusher chronograph...

Watch of the collection

...whose 44mm titanium and bronze case houses a black gloss dial with a telemeter chapter ring and a central "snail" tachometer scale. A sapphire crystal caseback allows the superb hand-wound Minerva movement to be seen in all its glory. Just 100 will be made. **£29,500. montblanc.com.**



Mondaine

Alongside celebrating 75 years of the famous Swiss railway station clock design, Mondaine has also gone large on sustainability this year, producing straps made from woven wool, cork and recycled plastic.

Watch of the collection

The anniversary special is a 40mm version of the classic railway clock design originally penned in 1944 by Swiss train engineer Hans Hilfiker before being reduced to wristwatch size by Mondaine in 1986. The celebratory model comes in a special box with a spare strap made from recycled PET bottles. **£209. mondaine.com**



Movado

The giant Movado Group is a major player on the watch scene due to its licensed manufacturing of watches for brands such as Tommy Hilfiger, Lacoste, Hugo Boss and Coach – so it came as quite a blow to the organisers of Baselworld when it announced that it was quitting the annual watch fair. Instead, the group now organises “dealer summits” in Davos, saving itself a reported £6.4m.

Watch of the collection

The 42mm Bold chronograph in blue ion plate with matching dial and mesh bracelet is certainly different. **£495. movado.com**



Omega

These are busy times for Omega, which is already well underway with preparations for its role as official timekeeper of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, for which it has launched an initial series of commemorative watches based on the celebrated Speedmaster.

Watch of the collection

Omega has marked the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11, with which it is associated due to the Speedmaster being the first watch to have been worn on the moon. Cue a platinum-cased version of the so-called Moonwatch, powered by a “reborn” Calibre 321 hand-wound movement that gets an onyx dial and subdials made from meteorite. **£45,500. omegawatches.com**



Nixon

With more than 50 models in its line-up, the American maker of affordable sports watches has something for everyone. Designs range from the retro-look, acetate-finish Time Teller to LCD digitals, analogue three-handers and funky-coloured plastic models.

Watch of the collection

The retro-cool and rather playful Dork Too is a 34mm rechargeable watch with Dan Dare looks that, in addition to showing you the time on an LED display, also speaks it out loud at the push of a button. When the battery runs low simply plug-in using the USB lead supplied. The humorous folk at Nixon refer to it as a smart ass watch... **£140. nixon.com**



Oris

Oris is one of many brands to have set out to save the seas this year. Its method is to support the Oceans Project that funds eco agencies trying to implement visionary methods of cleaning up the world's waters. This year alone Oris launched three limited-edition watches dedicated to the cause.

Watch of the collection

Once again, we can't get away from the deliciously vintage Big Crown Pointer Date. Last year's choice was the bronze-cased, mint-green dial version, but now there's a new steel model in delectable, deep red. As with all Oris watches, the 40mm case contains a good-quality mechanical movement. **£1,270. oris.ch**



Nomos Glashütte

Life might be rosy in the German town of Glashütte, where Nomos makes its watches, but the brand hasn't forgotten about the strife in the world. As a result, it's continuing its seven-year collaboration with Doctors Without Borders by introducing a new series of 500 of its Tangente Neomatik model that will be sold to raise funds for the charity.

Watch of the collection

The all-steel Club Sport presents a whole new aesthetic for Nomos. Less minimal than its more familiar models, the 42mm watch offers water resistance down to 300 metres. Also impressive is the ultra-supple steel bracelet. **£3,220. nomos-glashuette.com**



Panerai

Luxury watch brands are becoming increasingly imaginative in their methods of attracting buyers and Panerai's bold move is to offer not just products but experiences to go with them. The 19 buyers of the £34,800 Submersible Mike Horn Edition will get to meet the celebrated adventurer among the ice floes of the Arctic.

Watch of the collection

The new Submersible Marina Militare Carbotech takes the design originally created for Italian navy divers during the Forties and gives it a modern twist. Just 33 pieces will be made and the price includes a training session with “Comsubin”, the diving and commando group of the Italian Navy. **£34,800. panerai.com**



Parmigiani Fleurier

Parmigiani Fleurier makes fabulously finished, beautifully conceived watches – but not a profit.

Davide Traxler took over as CEO in July 2018 with a remit to turn the firm around and says he will be expanding in Asia, spending 50 per cent of its marketing budget on social media.

Watch of the collection

The first watch Michel Parmigiani designed to establish his dial name in 1996 was the round-cased Toric and while it is one of the simplest in the range it remains one of the most covetable.

This latest take on the model combines a rose-gold case with a new slate-grey dial with guilloché decoration surrounded by a hand-knurled bezel. **£20,600. parmigiani.ch**



Piaget

Piaget is often thought of as a jeweller that also sells watches – in fact, it began as a manufacturer of watch movements way back in 1874 and went on to become one of the greatest innovators in its field, notably in the creation of ultra-thin mechanisms.

Watch of the collection

Making dials from slivers of meteorite seems to be all the rage these days and they can look good, as in the case of the 40mm Altiplano in rose gold. Each meteorite dial carries a unique combination of horizontal and vertical lines, which is known as the Widmanstätten Pattern. Just 300 watches will be made. **£24,300. piaget.com**



Patek Philippe

Patek Philippe made it a tricky task to single out a specific piece from this year's new launches. The latest swathe of covetable models includes a "Jumbo" version of the Aquanaut in white gold with a new olive-green dial, a platinum-cased interpretation of its polarising Calatrava Pilot Travel Time and a stunning rose-gold regulator.

Watch of the collection

The new Calatrava Weekly Calendar, a 40mm steel-cased watch not only shows the day, the date and the month, but also the number of the week, making the watch both unusual and – in the best Bauhaus "form and function" tradition in which the original was conceived – superbly legible and attractive. **£25,610. patek.com**



Porsche Design

Fans of television series *The Professionals*, which ran from 1978 to 1983 starring Lewis Collins and Martin Shaw as the maverick law enforcers Bodie and Doyle, might have been too distracted by the near constant action to have noticed Doyle's wristwear: the distinctive Porsche Design Chronograph 1. Launched in 1972, it was the world's first black-cased wristwatch.

Watch of the collection

Back in Doyle's day, Porsche Design watches were made by a firm called Orfina. In 2014, PD took the business in-house and the quality and design is now better than ever. This year's hit is the 1919 Globetimer UTC, a dual-time zone watch. **From £5,100. porsche-design.com**



Paul Smith

The British designer has gone large on chronograph models this year, offering five different designs in the line-up.

Watch of the collection

Yes, it's a chronograph – and one that's distinctly reminiscent of a vintage Rolex Cosmograph Daytona, especially in the screw-down pushers and the font on the tachymeter bezel. Where it differs, however, is in the neat touches of red and yellow. And, of course, in the price tag...

£279. paulsmith.com



Rado

Rado has struck a deal with Les Couleurs Suisse, the organisation that licenses the original colour palette known as "Architectural Polychromy", established by the celebrated modernist architect Le Corbusier, and plans to use it for an ongoing series of ceramic watches.

Watch of the collection

We feel compelled to go back to the future and select the new interpretation of the fabulous Golden Horse dive watch that was originally released by Rado in 1957. The reissue remains true to the old design, with the same 37mm diameter case and delicious curved dial adorned with a seahorse motif. It's limited to 1957 examples and costs around £1,500. **rado.com**



Raymond Weil

Having attended the Baselworld watch fair every year since the brand was founded in 1976, Raymond Weil chose to abandon the event for good in 2019. As one of the show's longest-running exhibitors, its stand will be missed.

Watch of the collection

Following the sellout success of the original Tango 300 chronograph, created in partnership with the House Of Marley, Raymond Weil has launched a second Bob Marley tribute watch in the form of a quartz-powered GMT model. The black dial is subtly decorated with the reggae singer's lion head emblem. It's limited to 1,500 examples.

£1,095. raymond-weil.co.uk



Roger Dubuis

The main attraction on the Roger Dubuis stand at this year's SIHH show in Geneva was a watch that no one could buy. The Excalibur One-Off was made for the ultra-wealthy buyer of the first ever custom-built Lamborghini, the SC18 Alston, and styled accordingly.

Watch of the collection

The Excalibur Huracán Performante is the latest limited edition to emerge from the Lambo tie-in. With a 45mm titanium case, it includes a winding crown based on a wheel nut, bridges resembling the car's engine bay brace and a winding rotor mimicking the alloy rim pattern. The strap is made of recycled tyre rubber.

£43,000 rogerdubuis.com



Reservoir

The two-year-old Reservoir brand is fast making its mark with unusual, retrograde display watches inspired by measuring instruments. Having started with a series based on the distinctive speedometers used in the original Mini, the firm has now branched out into the underwater world with...

Watch of the collection

...the new Hydrosphere. Inspired by the pressure gauges found on scuba air tanks and with 250 metres water resistance it can be used as a serious dive tool for measuring decompression times. The 45mm watch is supplied on a steel bracelet and three dial designs are available.

From £3,840. reservoir-watch.com



Rolex

As is its way, the latest Rolex launches are not the sort of radical new designs that a lesser maker might feel the need to create in order to grab attention, but subtly and sensibly upgraded versions of tried-and-tested models. It might sound boring – but it works.

Watch of the collection

We liked the new Rolesor version of the mighty Sea-Dweller dive model, the beefed-up brother of the more ubiquitous Submariner. Combining Rolex Oystersteel and 18-carat yellow gold, the 43mm watch is powered by the latest Calibre 3235 movement and is water-resistant down to an unnecessary 1,220 metres. **£12,400. rolex.com**



Richard Mille

The next time you nip out at lunchtime to drop a six-figure sum on a Richard Mille, don't forget that the London boutique has relocated to bigger and better premises on Old Bond Street. The 300-square-metre store occupies two floors and boasts an on-site watchmaker, a library, cigar cabinet, VIP lounge and walk-in wine cellar.

Watch of the collection

The new RM50-04 split-seconds tourbillon is dedicated to F1 veteran Kimi Raikkonen. Echoing the colours of his team, Alfa Romeo, the watch has a movement made from titanium and carbon TPT. Just 30 examples will be made – although only those on an F1 driver's salary are likely to be able to afford one. **£982,800 richardmille.com**



Rotary

With 2020 marking the 125th anniversary since it was founded, the historic maker of affordable wristwear (now under Chinese ownership) has introduced a trio of limited editions that hark back to the good old days – not the late 19th century, but the mid 20th.

Watch of the collection

The three-model line-up comprises a 40mm model with a Forties aesthetic, champagne dial and gold-effect finish; a titanium military-look piece; and a gorgeous, steel-cased effort with a cream-coloured galvanic dial featuring crosshair marking. There's a quality Japanese Miyota automatic movement inside, too. **£249. rotarywatches.com**



Scuderia Ferrari

Hublot might be the official maker of luxury Ferrari watches – but it's a well-known fact that the car marque makes a good living from selling merchandise to people who can't actually afford to buy its cars, for whom Movado makes inexpensive Scuderia Ferrari watches.

Watch of the collection

The elegant Pilota chronograph certainly wouldn't look out of place beside a Ferrari steering wheel. Equipped with an automatic movement within a 45mm case and fitted with pedal-like chronograph triggers, the watch is attached by a black leather, red-stitched perforated strap and will be limited to 399 examples. **£1,650. store.ferrari.com**



Skagen

Skagen, the minimalist maker of watches, jewellery and leather goods, was founded 30 years ago. It's named after Denmark's northernmost town.

Watch of the collection

The Aaren Kulor Blue Colorburst must be one of the funkiest watches of the year. It has a 41mm case, a sandblasted dial and a quick-change strap system. **£89. skagen.com**



Seiko

On Christmas Day 50 years ago, a seismic event turned the watch world on its head – Seiko launched its Quartz Astron, the first viable quartz watch. Although the earliest versions cost almost as much as a small car, they opened the floodgates for the manufacture of numerous other inexpensive models that nearly killed-off mechanical watchmaking for good.

Watch of the collection

The exquisite Presage Arita Porcelain stands out, with dials that are hand-made in the small town of Arita, Japan. The watch is available in two versions – one with a date window, the other with a power-reserve indicator (*above*). **From £1,560. seikowatches.com**



Swatch

Swatch's Big Bold watches are statement-making, 47mm models with flat crystals, 3-D prints on the dial and bobbled rubber straps. There are six limited editions produced with streetwear brand A Bathing Ape. Four of the designs are dedicated to London, Paris, New York and Tokyo, one to Switzerland, and the sixth simply to "the world".

Watch of the collection

The brilliant Sistem51 collection of robot-assembled, 51-part mechanical watches is growing nicely. We like the Sistem Thought, which allows a view of the movement through the open-worked dial and the transparent caseback. **£180. swatch.com**



Shinola

Struggling to find your look? Shinola is offering to help with a new online stylist service that offers users the chance to fill in a simple form describing what they're looking for and the type of person they are. The stylist will respond with "shoppable" suggestions. Who said we were losing the ability to think for ourselves?

Watch of the collection

Shinola plunges into the competitive world of dive watches with a quartet of Monster models named after the great lakes – Superior, Ontario, Michigan and Huron. Each has a different coloured dial, but all have Sellita automatic movements and are water-resistant to 1,000 feet. **£1,200. shinola.co.uk**



TAG Heuer

This year saw the 50th anniversary of the square-cased Monaco, made famous by Steve McQueen in the 1971 movie *Le Mans* and revived with remarkable success in 1998. To mark the model's half-century, TAG didn't launch a special, limited-edition piece. It launched five, drip-fed throughout the year...

Watch of the collection

Unveiled at this year's 24 Hours Of Le Mans, this great-looking edition celebrates the decade from 1979-1989. The red, sunray dial with black-and-white detailing is superb and there's an up-to-date Calibre 11 movement inside. Problem is, the watch is limited to just 169 examples, so good luck finding one. **£5,350. tagheuer.com**



Thomas Sabo

"For the most daring gentlemen looking for a striking, total black style, the Thomas Sabo range includes sporty chronographs in a manly all-matte design." That's what the German jeweller tells us – and who would disagree with the assertion that watches with "high-impact cross and skull motifs set particularly unforgettable style statements"? Not us.

Watch of the collection

You want statements? The Rebel Spirit 3-D Skulls Gold should do it. Measuring 42mm in diameter, it's fitted with a gnarled leather strap. **£249. thomassabo.com**



Tissot

When 22-year-old Egan Bernal became the youngest person to win the Tour De France this summer, he also received a £300 Tissot Chrono XL Tour De France special edition presented by brand president François Thiébaud.

Watch of the collection

Basketball is gaining traction in the UK – which is probably why Tissot chose London to launch its new Chrono XL NBA Collector chronograph. The 45mm watch features an orange strap made from a strip of Spalding basketball leather and is supplied in a case containing a miniature ball and two drawers designed to hold 30 different casebacks, each carrying the logo of one of the 30 NBA teams. **£410. tissotwatches.com**



Tiffany & Co

Another quiet year for Tiffany's watch division, with no new offerings – but there are still some nice pieces to choose from.

Watch of the collection

The Tiffany Square in yellow gold is an entirely delectable, art deco-style dress watch with a lovely 27mm case. With its hand-wound movement, it really is like wearing a vintage watch made to modern standards. **£16,000. tiffany.co.uk**



Tommy Hilfiger

The Tommy Hilfiger watch range covers everything from a £99 two-hander to a £199 chronograph – and they're all well designed and nicely made.

Watch of the collection

Ideal for jungle ops, the new MWM1791634 chronograph with green-finish case and matching bracelet is really worth tracking down. **£199. uk.tommy.com**



Timex

Readers above the age of 40 might remember the days when Timex wrist watches were available to buy from the newsagent. They would be displayed on the shops' counters on revolving plastic stands and were simple and cheap. Some of us would like such things to come back – and now they have.

Watch of the collection

The Marlin is a timely reissue of the Sixties classic, the type of watch everyone's grandfather used to wear. These are the watches that made Timex ubiquitous and this one has a traditionally small 34mm case fitted with a hand-wound movement. Ah, nostalgia – it gets better all the time. **£175. timex.co.uk**



Tudor

Tudor leads the way when it comes to making good-quality "serious" watches at affordable prices. This year, the Black Bay line was enhanced with a new version of the bronze model and reinterpretations of the chronograph and 41mm three-hander in steel and gold.

Watch of the collection

The Black Bay that grabbed everyone's attention is the PO1 – a new watch based on a prototype made for the US Navy in the Sixties but never put into production. Quirky features include hinged lug tops for locking the 60-notch bezel and a protected winding crown at the four o'clock position. It's also water-resistant to 200 metres. **£2,830. tudorwatch.com**



TW Steel

Petter Solberg and his son Oliver stole the show at 2019's Goodwood Festival Of Speed with their remarkable displays of driving, so affordable watch brand TW Steel must be pleased to have signed Solberg senior as its ambassador.

Founded in 2005 by young Dutchman Jordy Cobelens, the big watch specialist now has more than 5,000 outlets in 100 countries.

Watch of the collection

We especially like the military-styled Maverick MS124 chronograph, which looks the part yet remains decidedly affordable thanks to its quartz movement. **£349 twsteel.com**



U-Boat

Panerai wasn't the only Italian watch brand to design military watches during the Second World War. Technical instrument-maker Ilvo Fontana was commissioned to do just that in 1942. His creations failed to enter production, but his grandson, Italo Fontana, established U-Boat in 2000 on the back of this family history.

Watch of the collection

The U-42 Unicom is a new 50mm, titanium-cased watch that looks as though it could be 50 years old thanks to a bespoke "distressed" finish involving the application of acid and other abrasive materials. Frankly, it could take you years to make it look this bad. **£4,600. uboatwatches.com**



Ulysse Nardin

Ulysse Nardin made its name with ship chronometers and this year reinforced its maritime links with the Marine Mega Yacht watch. This 44mm number features a tourbillon cage in the shape of a propeller, a dial based on a ship's bow and a power-reserve indicator in the form of an anchor connected to a fully operational miniature windlass.

Watch of the collection

Italian erotic comic-book artist Milo Manara created ten saucy illustrations to decorate the dials of a special series of watches. Each design is replicated in 20 watches priced at around £21,000 for steel versions and £27,000 for rose gold. **ulyssse-nardin.com**



Uniform Wares

It's a decade since British brand Uniform Wares started up, with the aim of designing watches in-house, having them assembled in Switzerland and keeping logos and decoration to a minimum. It's a formula that's worked.

Watch of the collection

The new M42 chronograph represents the first new treatment of the model in six years. Unlike the existing styles – polished steel or black PVD – this one has a bead-blasted case containing an ETA PreciDrive movement, the most accurate quartz wristwatch mechanism on the market. Choose from rubber or Milanese leather straps or a mesh bracelet. **£800. uniformwares.com**



Urwerk

Martin Frei, the artist who works with watchmaker Felix Baumgartner on Urwerk's extraordinary creations, said he came up with one concept after "filling pages of sketches in what was virtually a semi-hypnotic trance". Whatever he was taking, it's worked again.

Watch of the collection

The mildly steam-punk Maverick has a bronze case – intended to patinate with age – with a hinged lid that can be lifted to reveal the workings of the mechanism. The time is shown through a combination of numbered satellites and a red indicator that travels back and forth across a curved minute track. Just 22 examples will be made. **£65,600. urwerk.com**



Vacheron Constantin

Having spent decades being undervalued, the true worth of Vacheron Constantin's vintage pieces is now being recognised. Earlier this year, a unique, cushion-cased minute-repeating wristwatch called the Don Pancho fetched £600,000 at auction, a record for any vintage Vacheron. Time for a Don Pancho re-edition?

Watch of the collection

The Twin Beat Perpetual Calendar refutes the idea that the mainspring of a mechanical watch can only run for a preordained amount of time. It incorporates two balance wheels operating at different speeds so you can switch from "active mode" to "standby mode" to preserve power. **£195,000. vacheron-constantin.com**



Victorinox

Victorinox is working with Nespresso to reuse those aluminium capsules we're all used to making coffee with, creating the Pioneer Nespresso India Swiss Army Knife. What's the betting we'll see a recycled coffee capsule watch before too long?

Watch of the collection

Limited to 1,200 sets, the latest Inox watch comes with a woven strap made from yellow paracord. You also get a leather one hewn from firefighters' boot leather, a matching yellow paracord keyring and a Victorinox rescue tool. **£799. victorinox.com**



Van Cleef & Arpels

Pierre Arpels is said to have designed his eponymous dress watch in total secrecy in 1949. Made from yellow gold with a white enamel dial and black leather strap, it was available only to his closest friends – but, 18 years later, commerce prevailed and it officially joined the Van Cleef & Arpels watch inventory...

Watch of the collection

...and it's still the one. There are various versions, but we favour the 38mm rose-gold model with a white "waffle" dial reminiscent of the front of a dress shirt. **£12,000. vancleefarpels.com**



William Wood

This start-up British dial name was founded in 2016 by young entrepreneur Jonny Garrett whose late grandfather William Wood was in the fire service for 25 years. Already the watches are sold in 17 countries, with a percentage of profits from each sale going to the UK firefighters charity.

Watch of the collection

That's the Chivalrous Collection, which features a commemorative medal created from a melted-down Twenties firefighter's helmet in the caseback. There are five variations available, each in editions of 250. **£300. williamwoodwatches.com**



Vertex

Don Cochrane has revived the English watch company established by his great grandfather in 1916. Vertex was one of the original 12 MOD-approved military watch suppliers. After relaunching with the M100, Cochrane introduced a blackened version called the M100B, followed by the MP45, which is based on a single-button chronograph designed for the Royal Navy.

Watch of the collection

The new MP45 is finished in black DLC and comes with either a hand-wound or automatic movement – but only 27 of each will be made. As part of the deal you get a waterproof Pelican case and some quick-change straps. **£3,800. vertex-watches.com**



Zenith

In 1909, Louis Blériot became the first person to fly across the English Channel, a feat he achieved in 37 minutes. This year, French inventor and "watercraft" pilot Franky Zapata achieved the crossing in 22 minutes on a turbine-powered hoverboard. Like Blériot, he was wearing a Zenith.

Watch of the collection

The 45mm, bronze-cased Pilot Type 20 Adventure is ideal for such shenanigans, with its grained, green dial and outsized, luminous Arabic numerals. A khaki "Matrix" calfskin leather strap is supplied with the watch, along with an alternative made from camouflage fabric. **GQ From £5,900. zenith-watches.com**

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Out Of The Box

The two thousand-year-old 'mangle'

Story by Bill Prince

Numismatics – the study of currency – involves knowledge of history, culture, politics, art, economics and science. Think of it, then, as winemaking for the mind; no wonder the pursuit of the very best examples has for centuries attracted the attention of the rich and powerful.

Starting in the late Seventies, keen numismatists the Bulgari family worked their passion into their watches. In 2016 the brand responded to a client's desire to own a *haute horlogerie* example with the first in a series of one-of-a-kind Monete timepieces, for which the coin is fitted into the cover of a custom-made Octo Roma case housing Bulgari's award-winning Finissimo hand-wound skeleton tourbillon movement. With a single example taking a year to source and assemble, this is a necessarily rarified part of the watchmaking world, but one that talks to the highest level of connoisseur.

"You need a very sophisticated client, someone able to appreciate the work around the movement," says head of watch design Fabrizio Buonamassa Stigliani. This kind of object is not the sort for a show-off. Sometimes you have to find the right client to match the coin. The story behind the coin is often more important than the coin itself."

In its infancy, money acted as a proxy for prestige, demonstrating the issuer's wealth and influence through the intricacy of its design and the various signifiers engraved into its precious metals.

The example here was issued by the Roman Emperor Constans to mark a resounding victory over the Franks in 342. It may also have been associated with Constans' visit to Britain, a journey that required a winter crossing of the English Channel, making it the perfect travelling companion for a modern-day road warrior. **GQ**



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